ON WHAT AUTHORITY?

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A REVIEW OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

St. Alban's College Library

BY

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TO MY WIFE

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PREFACE

THIS book is the outcome of my fourth and final Charge as Bishop of Manchester, but the Charge has been entirely rewritten. My thanks are due and are hereby tendered to those who have assisted in the correction of the proofs and with suggestions, especially to the Rev. Canon Willoughby C. Allen and to the Rev. W. Coleman, Vicar of Moreton Morrell.

Shortlands,

October, 1922.

INTRODUCTION

THERE are at least two classes of persons who are not troubled by doubt. In the one, we find those who accept their religious beliefs as part of a spiritual inheritance. They may have passed through a struggle to attain a living faith in God. But, this faith found, they have taken over with it a theology which seems to belong to the first act of conversion. They may learn to defend it, but they never seriously question it. This book is not written for them.

Nor is it written for that far larger class who are not troubled by doubt because they are satisfied by vagueness and indefiniteness in their attitude to the spiritual world. They regard their haziness as a sign of breadth, even nobility, of mind. They look upon serious thought as fanaticism, and believe that they do honour to God by having no fixed ideas about Him. This book is not written for them.

It is written for those who wish to reason out for themselves the faith that is in them, not merely for their own comfort, but because they seriously believe in the duty of honouring God with all their mind, as well as with all their heart and soul. For they are conscious that they cannot really love God unless they know Him, and know Him as truly as He can be known by the best and most unsparing intellectual effort at their command. They are fully aware that the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and that to this defect of nature they have added a cloud of sin which still

further obstructs their intellectual vision. But it is better to be lost in the quest of the Holy Grail, than to have had no desire for the quest. It is even worth while to put on record some chart of their wanderings, here to help, it may be, there to warn, those who follow them. For there is, and always will be, a company of seekers after God, whose heart, though often disquieted and troubled, perseveres in crying out for the living God. "The living God"—not the time-honoured and richly-adorned images of Him that tradition has handed down for veneration—nor One Whose revelations of Himself are fundamentally inconsistent—but for the God Who is not the less Truth, because He is also Life and Love. For wayfarers on this search this book is written by a fellow-traveller (as he hopes), who, however much he has failed in his quest, is conscious that life's journey is drawing to an end, and that he has no interest in self-deception, but must before long give account of his stewardship.

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ON WHAT AUTHORITY

CHAPTER I

VERIFICATION OF FAITH

The Object of the Book stated: Not to prove the existence of God.—Nor to record a deliverance from unbelief.—But to show how modern research has tended to confirmation of the personal faith of an Evangelical Churchman.—The necessity of testing first principles in religion as consequent on giving the laity access to the Bible.—The Christ of the Bible the living Christ.

THE purpose of this inquiry is to review, as honestly as we can, the grounds of our faith in God. If such an inquiry is to be honest, it cannot avoid a personal approach and some personal element in its treatment throughout. To discuss generally the grounds on which Theism rests is a task beyond the present writer's reach, nor is it altogether to his taste. For there is not a little unreality about such inquiries. The God "in Whom we live, and have our being," cannot be a subject for scientific analysis, and the attempts that are made so to apply such processes to consideration of His Being are not likely to result in living faith. Nor can any scientific disproof of His Being be established by reasoning processes, since the probability will always remain that it is the reasoning that has been at fault. Realities may, in fact, be hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. For most men that which is both interesting and convincing, helpful and encouraging, is to be admitted into the shrine of another's experi-

ence and searching of heart. Even though doubts remain, the doubter learns to take courage, and makes a fresh effort to fight his way through his own entanglements. It is submitted that the personal element is to be welcomed rather than deprecated.

On the other hand, this is not a book of confessions, no history of the struggle of a soul out of darkness to light. It is a much plainer and more homely tale than that, and perhaps for that very reason not the less welcome to the ordinary reader. It is, in fact, a retrospect, in which are passed in review some of the elements which have contributed to a "the more confirmation" of the faith—a retrospect in which controversies will be treated, not as storms that are raging, but as storms that have blown over, bringing down dead boughs and rotten wood, but leaving behind a brighter sunshine, a clearer air and the opportunity for an output of more vigorous life, and more abundant fruitfulness. In old age the writer finds himself still not far from where he was, when the first cold blasts of doubt assailed him, when reading for his degree examinations. Then the question which was more insistent than all others was this, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." It is the most insistent question still. After honestly trying to do justice to questionings from all quarters, and to sift out the true from the false in all manner of new discoveries and interpretations, having learnt much and gained much, he still finds only one authority secure and unshaken, that of the historic Jesus Christ: he finds nowhere else the words of eternal life. There is no one else, "no other name given under heaven that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."—(Acts iv. 12.)

But to say this is very far from saying that the researches and discoveries of the last half century have been labour lost. They have tended often to the more confirmation of the faith by presenting it in a fresh light, by increasing our knowledge of the working of God in Nature and in History, by placing the scriptures in their true relation to the rest of human literature, and thereby greatly enhancing their value and elucidating their meaning. The results so obtained could not be comprehended in one volume, nor indeed in many. All that will be attempted here is to concentrate on the question of the authority for our faith the light thrown by various forms of research, especially in the last half century. To this end a contribution from what is commonly described as Evangelical Churchmanship may be of some value. What has been done in this field has for the most part been done from other points of view. That the whole truth may be reached, it is necessary that all should bring their respective contributions, as they have been taught of Him, "Whose fulness is all in all in being fulfilled."

But before going farther, let us first make sure that any such inquiry is desirable. For it is too often assumed that this point may be taken for granted. Yet it is far from being obvious. In all ordinary studies the metaphysical or historical groundwork of them is a field reserved for specialists. The average student takes it on trust that the subject, which he is approaching, has been found to rest on some secure intellectual substructure. It is not often that a student, even of history, begins with an inquiry into the laws of historical evidence, or a botanist with weighing the trustworthiness of sense impressions. But those who would study the

authority on which their faith rests soon find themselves in regions of philosophical inquiry, for which they may be imperfectly, or wholly, untrained. In such cases the average Englishman makes an appeal to commonsense, which is quickly ruled out of court by the more learned. He has no right to be surprised, for the mysteries into which he has intruded, are immeasurably great. What depths of unfathomable meaning are contained in the words: "God," "the world," "myself." It is not strange that reverent minds should shrink from the familiar ease with which such speculations are too often treated, and should plead that the discussion of them should be reserved for professed theologians. "Let the Church inquire and teach, let the layman be content to learn and practice."

Hence it comes to pass that the study which concerns itself with man's deepest and most universal needs is one of the most specialised. In spite of pains expended to give it an appearance of simplicity, theology can only be estimated fairly by those who have a considerable acquaintance with metaphysics, psychology, archæology, comparative religion, laws of literary criticism and sometimes Greek, Latin and Hebrew. The simplification of the faith results in mystification. The key of knowledge is not indeed taken from those who would enter into the kingdom, but the keys handed to them are so many, and the locks so complicated, that none but the learned have any hope of entering in. Thus scholarship almost becomes a new form of sacerdotalism.

But however deterrent these difficulties may be superficially, we must not forget that the possession and use of the Bible by a whole Church and nation entails responsibilities which cannot be avoided. A Church which

puts the Bible into the hands of children, and of the unlearned, must be prepared to answer very sincerely and very thoroughly the questions which the Bible raises. It is not enough to say, "There is the Word of God: take it, read it, and believe it," for there are on the face of it at least apparent contradictions which must be reconciled: there are questions of interpretation and application: there are statements which seem at all events to conflict with the revelation of God contained in the Book of Nature. Objections to revealed religion arising out of the history and science of the Bible are hurled at the heads of young people. They cannot avoid them. More bewildering even than arguments of avowed opponents are suggestions prompted not always by reason, sometimes by conflict with passion. Unless a satisfactory method of dealing with these difficulties can be reached we must be prepared for sharp criticism on the policy of general Bible circulation. Yet where shall we find a line of instruction and defence which shall do justice to the difficulties of honest enquirers without making them wholly dependent on second-hand information, and leaving them to be tossed about by the winds of conflicting scholarly theories? Faith demands some firmer foundation: some truth which it can honestly make its own: it demands a Jesus Christ Who does not alter His form to suit the theories of Hegel, Renan, Schweitzer, or Foakes Jackson, but Who is veritably the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

The purpose of this volume is to show that the Christ Who is revealed not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old, and is there so revealed that the unlearned may find in Him Saviour, Lord, and God, does more truly satisfy the needs of the human soul, does

more truly bring man into right relation with God than the representations of Him advanced by some forms of current philosophical theology, and is also more truly the historic Christ. For this purpose it will be necessary to go beyond the echoes of philosophy which reach those who are not professed theologians, and to refer to works that have not popular currency. But the endeavour will be made, to simplify not to mystify, and continually to come back to the living Christ, Who must be for the humblest believer the standard by which his judgments are formed, the tribunal before which falsehood is discerned from truth.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Why selected as starting point of enquiry: 1. Failure of rationalism to reconstruct the historical Christ; Verdict of Schweitzer. — 2. Literary uniqueness of New Testament; Humility of origin; Absence of definite aim; political or philosophical; other-worldliness.—3. Permanence as contrasted with: (*a*) Contemporary Jewish literature; (*b*) Contemporary Christian literature.—4. Spiritual power exercised by it, though it does not claim as O.T. or Quran to be a revelation, nor to legislate, nor to appeal to national pride.—5. The Book of our common humanity.

The first difficulty which confronts an enquirer into the truth about Jesus Christ is to find some sure ground as a starting-point, some ground common to traditional theology and its critics. He will naturally ask, "Is there any one Gospel which I may accept as a true record of fact? or, if not a whole Gospel, are there any parts, records of facts, or records of uttered words, which have been placed beyond dispute by criticism?" The answer must be in the negative—indeed he will find that the very existence of Jesus of Nazareth has been disputed. The attempt to go behind the Christ of the creeds to some other Jesus of history has been singularly unsuccessful. Schweitzer (*Quest of the Historical Jesus* translated by Montgomery, p. 396) sums it up thus:

"There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus. The Jesus of Nazareth who came publicly forward as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the Kingdom of God, who founded the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, and died to give His work its final consecration, never had any

existence. He is a figure designed by rationalism, endowed with life by liberalism and clothed by modern theology in an historical garb."

It is interesting to note in passing that Schweitzer himself is very far from accepting the Christ of theologians—and yet that he gave this proof of the sincerity of his faith in Jesus, that having completed his literary work, he has gone out to be a missionary in Africa. He wrote not as one who had no sympathy with the work of his German fellow-theologians. He says in the same chapter: "It is impossible to over-estimate what German research on the life of Jesus has accomplished. It is an uniquely great expression of sincerity, one of the most significant events in the whole mental and spiritual life of humanity." But for all that, as a historical effort, it is a failure.

A discouraging announcement for any who might have hoped to find in all this work a starting point for reconstruction! It is clear that we must find some other beginning.

It is here suggested that we should make the New Testament itself our point of departure, and that, without troubling ourselves for the present at all events, with the exact dates of the various component documents. Whatever may be the story of its origin we have in the New Testament a literature of very unique and extraordinary value. What book or what literature in the world is there that can compare with it? The world owes a vast debt to many other great treatises: the Dialogues of Plato, the works of Aristotle, the Æneid, the Homeric poems, the *Divina Commedia* of Dante, the plays of Shakespeare, the *Novum Organum* of Bacon, Kant's *Critique*, Hegel's *Logic*, Darwin's *Evolution of*

Species, and a host of others. But all these, with the doubtful exception of the Homeric poems, are the work of master minds, each having for its author a name of pre-eminent and undisputed genius. But which of the writers of the New Testament can be placed in the same field with these giants of literature? Not even St. Paul nor St. John. Of the rest there is not one who has any sort of claim to literary talent. They were not collaborateurs; they were not students trained in a school of philosophy, or even of theology; they had no expectation that their works would ever be placed within the covers of a single volume. They made no claim to originality, took no trouble to harmonise their stories, made no attempt to frame one common explanation even of the personality of Jesus. Not artists, nor originators, above all, not partisans working for their own glory or the advancement of their school of thought—they were but reporters, expounders, heralds, and their theme the crucified carpenter's Son of Nazareth. It may be safely said that none of them (except, perhaps, the writer of the fourth Gospel) was conscious that his work was of more than ephemeral value, or destined to have any but the narrowest circulation. No method of criticism can dispute the extraordinarily humble origin of the books which we know as the New Testament.

Another very remarkable feature of these books is their aimlessness. They open, indeed, with the heralding of the Kingdom of Heaven and close with the establishment of that Kingdom, but it is emphatically a Kingdom of Heaven—not a Utopia, not a Platonic Republic, not a society or institution which could conceivably be established on earth, but a kingdom of which the

preliminary condition is that this heaven and earth should pass away, and that the work of creation should be begun afresh. The keynote of the volume is emphasised in its closing words: "Yea, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."—(Rev. xxii. 20.) The writers are not consciously laying the foundations of a social order, of a body politic, of a Church, not even of a religion which is to last 2000 years, or, for all that we know, 10,000 or 100,000. No such idea occurs to them. The only professed historian, S. Luke, brings his history, the Acts of the Apostles, to no conclusion. Attempts to found either Churches or bodies politic upon the New Testament have been fiascos. The Poor Men of Lyons, the Lollards, the Anabaptists, the fifth monarchy men, Calvin's Genevan Republic as political ventures, and equally the various Churches of East and West, have either disappeared in the attempt to carry out New Testament principles literally, or, in striving to accommodate those conditions to practical life, have produced situations grotesquely unlike any society that the New Testament writers portrayed or imagined. Papist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Quaker all appeal with equal confidence to the New Testament, since, if it is indeed true that their own principles can only be established with ingenuity, it is no less true that the principles of their competitors can be disproved with certainty. Nothing else could be expected from writers whose most glowing anticipation was that "the day of the Lord was at hand," and their chief consolation in trouble, that it was "the last hour." Indeed we may remark in passing that there is no stronger proof that the New Testament, as a whole, belongs to the first century of the Christian era, than

the fact that it does not provide for any future age, but clings to the belief that the Lord would return before the generation that had seen Him on earth had wholly passed away. This prediction is definitely repeated in each of the Synoptic gospels, and the echo of it is unmistakably heard in the last chapter of S. John. In all human literature it would be difficult to find a more unworldly book than the New Testament, or one which, tested by its contents, was more certain to be quickly falsified in its chief anticipation.

How quickly, and how entirely, may be seen by reference to the Jewish Apocalyptic literature of the latter half of the first century, strictly coeval with the books of the New Testament, and dealing very largely with the same problems, the entry of sin into the world, the law, the Messianic hope, the resurrection and the judgment to come. These books for the most part passed into oblivion, from which they have indeed been rescued and published. But no one reads them, except a few Biblical students. No cheap edition could secure for them an ordinary circulation. Interesting as monuments of the past, and for purposes of comparison with the New Testament, they are for all practical purposes dead literature. Life cannot be infused into them. No life flows from them. It is not unreasonable to ask how it happened that the New Testament did not suffer the same fate.

The obvious answer is that the New Testament owes its preservation to the Church, being treasured by the early Christians and by them transmitted to succeeding ages. But this answer conveys a very imperfect idea of the real mysteries which surround the birth-story of the New Testament. Because the documents which

have reached us from the first centuries of Church life are few, we are apt to forget that they are few out of very many. We have knowledge of sixteen other gospels current in this period, besides other literature, such as the Epistles of Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Acts of Thecla, and writings of the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic Fathers. The early Christians were obscure in station but fervent proselytisers. They arrested the attention of many who opposed them, of many whom they half convinced. They had as yet no central Church organisation, no creeds, and hardly any formularies. Yet soon after the middle of the second century the Church had her New Testament, practically our New Testament, accepted as authoritative by the Church to the exclusion of all her other writings. A century sufficed for the production, selection and establishment of the New Testament. It was written, some of it, by unlearned men, none of it by professed men of literature. It was selected from other writings competing against it, by men who certainly were not literary critics, men whose piety was their only qualification for the task; selected in an age of persecution, of heresies, and of deep discouragement since the Lord's promised return had failed of its expected fulfilment. Yet with a rare courage the Church left that promise unexpunged, unaltered—left it to bear its own witness, and to find in some unknown way its appointed end. We, who have learnt to explain it away, have never done justice to the Church of the second century, to its refusal to accept for its Lord and God, any other than the crucified Nazarene Who seemed wholly to have forgotten their existence. It was the New Testament that held them together. Out of it they fashioned afresh the image of

their Lord, learnt to distinguish Him from the false Christs whose claims were pressed upon them, learnt what manner of men He would have them to be, learnt to love one another, and to lay down their lives for His Name's sake.

It would not be difficult, but it would surely be superfluous, to enlarge on the power of the New Testament in subsequent ages. There has been no book like it for spiritual force. It contains moral principles embedded in parables so simple that the most unlearned can grasp them, so convincingly righteous that no one can dispute them, so unworldly that literal obedience, if attempted in simplicity, is attempted only by such as have turned their backs upon the world and its attractions. Uncompromising, it lays down the choice that every soul must make: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—(1 John ii. 15.) Uncompromising, it reveals with equal force the perfect humanity and the perfect Divinity of Jesus Christ. But it knows no such words as either humanity or Divinity. Philosophies have been built on it and it has shattered them. It has been ground down into simple histories and has in turn ground the histories to powder. But "babes and sucklings" have rejoiced in its good tidings, the weary and heavy laden have found rest for their souls, prodigals have been restored to their homes, harlots redeemed and led back to paths of righteousness. Who shall reckon the noble army of martyrs all through the centuries, who, from every nation and kindred and tongue, have welcomed death that they might bear witness to its teaching? Of whom not a few had only this charge laid against them, that they possessed and treasured the book.

The peculiar character of the New Testament stands out in even clearer relief when we contrast it either with the Old Testament or with the Quran. By this statement no particular theory of inspiration is intended, no implication that inspiration is a question of degree, not of quality. Of the Old Testament it will be necessary presently to speak more fully. But here it is enough to point out that the sacred books of Judaism and Mohammedanism make an express claim to the character of *revelation*: they claim to be given by direct communication from God. They enact laws, regulate worship, use history for the conveyance of ethical or religious truth, they prescribe for the simplest details of daily life. They claim also and with good reason to be great literary standards in their respective languages. Both of them minister in different degrees to racial and national exclusiveness. Poles apart in many respects, they are alike in their Semitism, their proud disdain of the non-Semitic world.

Of the New Testament only one book claims to be a revelation: the rest are records of fact, or letters, prompted by special occasions, directed, for the most part, to particular Churches. No attempt is made to legislate or to regulate the details of daily life. For standard of worship the Lord's prayer suffices. The Eucharist is a daily meal, solemn as a remembrance of the Lord's death and pledge of His return, but not a formulated act of worship, still less a sacrifice. The literary style is certainly not classical, at times it is hardly grammatical. It appeals to no patriotic sentiment, feeds no national vanity. It rises indeed in some passages to loftiest heights of the sublime, but only by reason of its subject, never by any conscious striving

after eloquence. Yet in spite of these and other literary shortcomings it is a book for all time—for all ages—for all races of the world. No, it is not its Hellenism as contrasted with the Semitism of the Old Testament and of the Quran that has given it this character. For Hellenism, too, has its own pride, its own exclusiveness, its own contempt for the barbarian. But for the New Testament, "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond man, free man, but Christ is all and in all."—(Col. iii. 11). Once more it must be repeated that this cosmopolitan character is not stamped on it by the genius of any single author. It is stamped on it by its theme. Just because from the first verse of S. Matthew to the last verse of Revelation, from page to page, from chapter to chapter, from verse to verse, from line to line, Christ is all and in all, therefore this most unworldly of all books must be for all time, the whole world's own book, the book of our common humanity.

"Let us now turn aside and see this great sight." Aye, and let us take "off our shoes from off our feet for the place whereon we stand is holy ground."—(Exod. iii. 3, 5.) The consideration to which we have been leading up is this. Since the greatness of the New Testament is not in the authors, but in the theme that inspired them, and that theme is Christ Jesus, must we not ask, "Who is this Christ Jesus?" We must ask the question with a determination to obtain something like a scientific answer. For we are dealing, not with a figment of the mind, not with a myth, not with an ecclesiastical tradition, but with a positive fact—the fact of the New Testament. For the present it concerns us little if at

all, that there is a Synoptic problem, that "Q" existed or did not exist, that the authorship of S. John's Gospel, or of the book of Revelation is disputed, that S. Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles has been called in question. We shall not attempt to establish or dissolve harmonies, nor to decide the historicity of particular miracles. We are not to deal with the origin of scattered documents, but with the special characteristics of a collected volume. It is no exaggeration to say that we are confronted with the most wonderful of all literary facts—the existence of the New Testament. How are we to account for it?

CHAPTER III

THE AUTHORITY BEHIND THE NEW TESTAMENT IS CHRIST HIMSELF

Is the Christology of the New Testament the result of development, or is it a reproduction of our Lord's teaching concerning Himself? How came the verdict of the crucifixion to be reversed? The commonly offered "whispers" of Resurrection not enough, nor do they explain prominence given to crucifixion in the Gospels, which in N.T. is connected with atonement for sin.—The mystery religion theory explicitly contradicted by S. Paul who proves that the cross and atonement were the teachings of the Church within seven years at most after the crucifixion.—Further evidence of the Testimonies which are older than any N.T. writings and represent the Emmaus road teaching of our Lord, thus explaining attitude of the primitive Church to the Old Testament.—This explanation not inconsistent with our Lord's teaching of direct and immediate forgiveness as recorded by Synoptists.

Objection will certainly be taken to the manner in which the New Testament has been treated in the foregoing chapter, as if it presented a consistent view of the personality of Christ; almost it will be said, as though it were the work of a single author. Such treatment will appear to be a defiance of the laws of historical evidence, and of the principle of evolution which underlies all organic life. Life does not stand still for half a century. Forces set in motion work out their destinies. No single author will be consistent even with himself over as long a period of time. Still less is it possible that any movement so plastic, so revolutionary as a new religion in the fervour of its first being, should present no signs of development over five or six decades, during which it was coming into contact with other faiths and forms of thought in many different countries. The

task of scholarship, it will be urged, has been the perfectly reasonable task of tracing this development, the records of which have come down to us, not from a single author, but from men whose training and temperament varied so greatly that the differences in their outlook could not fail to be important and noteworthy for anyone who was a searcher after truth, and not a mere stubborn defender of outworn tradition. To treat the New Testament as if it were practically a single book will be condemned as sheer obscurantism.

To this line of critisism our answer must be that we are not unconscious of the variety in outlook and temperament of the writers whose works form the New Testament, nor are we unconscious of the gulf that appears to separate the " carpenter's Son " of Nazareth from the Lamb that sits upon the throne, and receives the homage of the Heavenly host in terms identical with, or even fuller than, the homage that they offer to the " Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." It is no part of our belief to deny these differences but rather to emphasise them. The problem to be decided is this. What is the true account of the process by which within 70 years or even 60, the span of a lifetime, Jesus of Nazareth comes to be identified with the Christ of the Book of Revelation—King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Alpha and Omega, a title which He shares with " the Lord God which was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty." Was this tradition the evolution merely of Christian sentiment reflecting upon the story of Jesus, or was it a claim which Jesus Himself made and instructed His disciples to make in respect of Him ? If this latter view be correct, then the unity of the New Testament is not a relic of obscurantism, but essential

to a right understanding of the historical Jesus Christ. Behind the writers He stands as the true author, and He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

In considering this question the crucial moment is undoubtedly the time immediately following our Lord's crucifixion. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of what we read in S. Mark's Gospel, where it is plainly stated that our Lord was challenged to establish the truth of His claims by coming down from the cross. Here was a sign that could not have been disputed. "He saved others: Himself He cannot save. Let the Christ the King of Israel now come down from the Cross, that we may see and believe."—(S. Mark xv. 31, 32) The challenge was not accepted, but, after a darkness of three hours, there came from the cross what seemed to be a confession of disappointed hopes, of rescue expected and not rendered, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" No legions of angels, no Elijah from heaven appeared. Soon all was over. "He gave up the ghost." And though the centurion which stood by over against Him said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (S. Mark xv. 39) there was nothing to support his conviction, no apparent shred of foundation for it except, we doubt not, the difference between the behaviour of Jesus and that of ordinary criminals. Still there is no question that, in that moment, the cause of Jesus appeared to be a lost cause, and the more extravagant His claims the more complete their condemnation. Had He claimed to be the Son of God? Then surely God had disowned Him.

This is the point on which our thoughts must be fixed, the moment from which, if evolution there was, the evolution must begin. A reasonable and sufficient

cause, a cause which, from the evolutionist's point of view, must be non-miraculous has to be found. It has not been found. "Rumours of resurrection" will not serve the turn. Why should the idea which was unintelligible to the disciples before the crucifixion become an accepted belief immediately after that awful fiasco?

This argument has been so often, and so ably stated, that it has been repeated, not in the hope of convincing those who reject it, but as an argument which seems to be of insuperable strength to those who are sometimes called traditionalists. It does not stand by itself. For, even if it were allowed that mere whisperings in coteries of disciples were sufficient to overcome the plain evidence of a public execution, it would reasonably be expected that in the teaching concerning Jesus, His miraculous birth, His wonderful works, the glory of His resurrection and the certainty of his appearance after His death would be in the foreground, the crucifixion in the background. But the very reverse is the truth. The crucifixion is related in greater detail than any other part of His Life. We can fix the events of almost every hour of the great tragedy. Even where the accounts differ they are not inconsistent. In this respect the crucifixion story contrasts most strikingly with that of the Resurrection. Important as the latter was for their faith, the disciples took no pains to establish an account of it which would stand cross-questioning. They preached, indeed, Jesus and the Resurrection, but not less fervently Christ crucified. "Far be it from me to glory," cries S. Paul, "save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ."—(Gal. vi. 14.) "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."—(1 Cor. ii. 2.) "We preach Christ crucified."

—(1 Cor. i. 23.) "Ye were redeemed," says S. Peter, "with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."—(1 Peter i. 19.) "Christ Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree" . . . "by Whose stripes ye were healed."—(1 Peter ii. 24.) "The blood of Jesus His Son," writes S. John, "cleanseth us from all sin."—(1 John i. 7.) "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us."—(1 John iii. 16.) And throughout the Book of Revelation Christ is designated as the Lamb. "I saw in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain."—(Rev. v. 6.) In the same strain the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews calls on the persecuted believers to look unto Jesus . . . "Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising shame."—(Heb. xii. 2.) Such insistence on the crucifixion, such consent to put it in the forefront of Christian teaching, is quite inexplicable if it was indeed —apart from idle whisperings and hysterical imaginations—the last word, the closing scene in the drama of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is alleged, indeed, that the disciples, and especially S. Paul, borrowed doctrines of Salvation and Atonement from Mystery Religions with a view of surmounting the difficulties presented by the crucifixion. This conjecture would have more weight, or at least be entitled to more consideration, if it were not expressly contradicted by S. Paul. In his first letter to the Corinthians, of the genuineness of which there is no question, S. Paul sets himself to expound the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, the glad tidings with which he had brought great joy into the darkness of the heathen world. He

prefaces his exposition with these words: "You remember the purport of my preaching: for I handed on to you in the forefront of everything what was no invention of my own, but what I also received, that Christ died for sins, as the Scriptures have predicted."—(1 Cor. xv. 3. Robertson, *International Critical Commentary*, p. 330). No one has dated this letter later than A.D. 57. Its probable date is A.D. 55. Taking A.D. 30 as the date of the crucifixion, we have a period of 25 years, in which it has become a matter of tradition that Christ died for our sins, "as the Scriptures have predicted." Now S. Paul's preaching, independent as it was of the Church at Jerusalem, was not so independent, as to be the mere outcome of his private meditations. "It came to him," he says, "through revelation of Jesus Christ."—(Gal. i. 12.) In this sense there is abundance of room for that originality which is characteristic of it. But even as a persecutor he must have acquired some knowledge of the teaching of the Church which he was persecuting. It is impossible that in the course of examination of Christians the question of the crucifixion should not have been raised, some sort of defence offered. The defence, which S. Paul had received, and which he delivered, was that "Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures have predicted"; whether S. Paul received the whole of this defence from the Christians whom he persecuted, or, part of it from them and part of it from the Lord, there is no room for doubt that within a very few years of the crucifixion, at the outside seven,* and more probably far less, the infant Church put forward this explanation of the death of Christ and put it forward as the explanation of Our Lord Himself—based upon the Old Testament Scriptures.

* The date of S. Paul's conversion.

Further light is thrown on this problem by the careful examination of Old Testament quotations in the New Testament and early Fathers, which has been conducted by Dr. Rendel Harris and his co-editor, Mr. Vacher Burch, and published in their book called the *Testimonies*. We have there strong evidence for believing that a book of Old Testament evidences for convincing Jews concerning Christ was extant before any New Testament writings—including even the earliest Epistles of S. Paul, and that it was in constant use both in the New Testament and in patristic literature for many centuries. This book was, beyond doubt, the λόγια κυριακά not "sayings of our Lord," but oracles concerning the Lord. This collection Papias attributed to Matthew the Apostle, and declares that the oracles were written in Hebrew, and interpreted by each one as he could. The evidence for the existence of this book is drawn from the following sources :—(1) peculiar texts ; (2) recurrent sequences of texts in a particular order ; (3) persistence in mistakes as to the source of texts ; (4) editorial comments and questions frequently repeated ; (5) the matter selected for controversy. This ancient collection of texts went to prove that "Christ is King and Lord, and Priest and God, and Angel and man, and general and stone, and the child that is born, and that He comes to suffer and then returns."—(Justin Dial, c. *Tryph.* c. 34.) Proof is furnished in the Testimonies that these "evidences" were used by S. Paul in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians and by S. Peter as well as in the Epistle to the Hebrews. An instance of the kind of evidence on which Dr. Harris and his co-editor rest will be found in the note at the end of this chapter, and also a selection of the principal evidential

texts. But what is specially noteworthy is that the texts would have no evidential value in arguments with heathen, or in preaching to heathen. The common allegation that the reference of the death of Christ to atonement for sin was borrowed from mystery-religions disappears before the Testimonia. It is beyond question that this reference goes back to the very earliest days of the Church, and that the spirit of the book is best expressed in the words of Athenagoras in reply to a Jewish questioner, "That, which Isaiah said, he said in the person of Christ: listen therefore to his entire prophecy, that thou mayest know that the prophecy suits no one else except Christ alone." Christianity from the beginning read an entirely new meaning into the Old Testament, and grounded its faith on the authority of the Old Testament. Thoughtful students will at once ask how this came to pass. It is easy to conjecture that a theory was started by some ingenious disciple, and finding acceptance acquired authority. But the conjecture is as unsatisfactory as it is easy. There is evidence, in the Acts of the Apostles, which can hardly be set aside that those who had been our Lord's intimate companions on earth held a prominent place in the Church, and acted as a court of reference and appeal, and that they so used the Old Testament. What is told us in the Acts is confirmed by S. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians. This new meaning of the Old Testament, this doctrine of a Messiah suffering for sin, could not have established itself and become the accepted teaching of the Church, without sanction from the Apostles.

But the Apostles had been taught and trained by the Lord Himself, and it is often alleged that the connection between His death and the forgiveness of sin was entirely

foreign to His teaching. "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." The parables of the lost coin, lost sheep and lost son are cited to show the directness of forgiveness, while such passages as "the Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many," or "This is my blood which is shed for you for the remission of sins" are declared to be interpolations, and other passages of the same nature come from S. John's gospel, which is always put out of court, when evidence is in question. It is natural, therefore, to ask how it came to pass that the Apostles who had been so carefully trained by our Lord in the doctrine of *immediate* forgiveness of sin, so readily after His death propounded a new doctrine, and propounded it with authority.

The answer suggested by Mr. Vacher Burch in *The Testimonies* is this: "Nothing is clearer than this, that the Old Testament citations, which go to make up the Testimonia Book, are there because of a *looking back to them from the point of view of Jesus Himself* (the italics are our own). We may find fault both with the passages chosen and the use to which they are put; for we are of the twentieth century, and we are far away from the first century mind of Palestine unto which His revelation was made. A close consideration should lead us to see that a creative mind was at work providing others with a language with which they could natively understand and express the meaning of Jesus Christ; indeed, so effective is this language, and so profound has been its influence on the text of the Gospels, that the suspicion arises with power whether Jesus Himself did not originate the Testimonia method. We are told that on the way to Emmaus He opened up the older writings to His disciples to give them natural reasons for His unique

self and life. The critical study of the text of the Gospels would seem to adduce that in this respect all His ministry was a walking of ways to Emmaus."—(*Testimonia*, Pt. II., p. 70.)

The changed attitude of the primitive Church to the Old Testament would be amply explained, if it was in fact the result of the direct teaching of Jesus. It may be added also that, if we give credence to S. Paul's belief that the Gospel was directly communicated to him by the Lord, it is at least possible that the unfolding of the doctrine of Atonement, in respect of which he is sometimes contrasted with the Evangelists was from the same source. In other words, that there is no inconsistency between the teaching of S. Paul and the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. The Church was not in error, not acting under blind impulse, but guided by the Holy Spirit, when of Gospels and Epistles she made one New Testament. The Authority behind the New Testament is the Authority of the Risen and living Lord working, before His Ascension by direct communication, and after it by the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

The question will arise, "Why did not our Lord in His teaching give more prominence to His atoning death?" But this is a question which we cannot answer, partly because the references which He made are ruled out of evidence; such as "that He gave His life a ransom for many"; that "His blood was shed for the remission of sins"; that "He gave His flesh for the life of the world"; that "He laid down His life for the sheep" and others: partly, because we have no complete account of the teaching of Jesus, but most of all, because we cannot penetrate into the mysteries of

His self-consciousness as both God and man; nor into the still greater mysteries of the Divine Nature, and of the relation of the Persons within the Blessed Trinity. We know that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world; we know that the Father and Son are One; we know that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; we know that the pardoning redeeming love of God dwelt in the Christ Jesus during the earthly ministry; but how far, and how fully, the man Christ Jesus entered into the full purport of His mission on earth we know not; what limitations of His human knowledge were removed by His death; what fuller, clearer understanding of the Cross of Calvary the Resurrection morning brought with it, we know not. It is idle, therefore, to hazard guesses why this mystery should have been revealed to the disciples only, and not to the people: why that other should have been revealed before His resurrection and yet another after it; or even why the blindness of the understanding of the disciples should have lost for us precious words which, when uttered, seemed to them unmeaning. Speculations as to things which our Lord is supposed not to have said are but unprofitable exercises of ingenuity. But that, eventually, He Himself revealed to the disciples the significance of His death, connecting it with the forgiveness of sin, may be taken to be ascertained fact, and also to have been of the very essence of the teaching of the primitive Church.

It would carry us too far from our subject to enter at this point into conflicting theories concerning the Atonement. But it may be said that no theory is true to the New Testament which does not give full prominence to the idea of sacrifice, and of sacrifice as taught in the Old

Testament. The link between the two Testaments cannot be severed at this point. For this reason explanations of the Atonement which regard the death of Christ simply as a manifestation of love, whatever other value may be attached to them, cannot be regarded as having the authority which lies behind the New Testament. The Christ, Who is not a Sacrifice for Sin, is not the Christ of the New Testament. That this is the case will be made more clear by examination of some of the attempts which have been made to present to us a Jesus, in whose story the death is a tragic but really unnecessary incident, at best, a martyrdom not unlike that of Socrates. Of these attempts there will be selected as fairly representative, one by Mr. H. G. Wells, who, on the whole, follows Schweitzer, another by Professor T. H. Green, the English exponent of Hegelianism, with whom Professor Eucken may be both contrasted and compared, and a fourth by Dr. Rashdall.

SPECIMENS OF THE TESTIMONIA. QUOTATIONS AND INFERENCES THEREFROM

In *The Testimonies* (Dr. Rendell Harris, Chap. II., p. 21) the author having already shewn by quotations that "the Testimony Book" may claim priority to S. Matthew, Acts, 1 Peter, and Romans, proceeds to the opening verse of S. Mark, "Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, 'Behold I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make His paths straight.'"—(S. Mark i. 2, 3, R.V.)

Here we have two quotations from the Old Testa-

ment, Malachi iii. 1: "Behold I send My messenger before My face, and he shall prepare My way before Me," and Isaiah xl. 3: "Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." The ascription of the two to Isaiah being erroneous, the later MSS. naturally substituted for, "as it is written in Isaiah," the words "as it is written in the prophets." But the older MSS. have the reading now restored to us in the Revised Version. The error was, no doubt, in the Testimony Book, and it appears in a Testimony Book, which does not quote from S. Mark but reproduces the *ancient Testimonia*, a book of an anti-Moslem apologist, of course many centuries later, "God said by the tongue of Isaiah the prophet about the Christ, and about John the son of Zechariah, "I will send My messenger," etc. The instance, if it stood by itself might be accounted for in other ways. But it is one instance out of very many in which errors and tags have evidently one origin and that origin, this ancient *Book of Testimonies*.

Of the evidential texts in *The Testimonies*, the following may be taken as conspicuously in use in Christian literature: Psalm cx. 3, in the Septuagint, "Before the daystar I begat Thee," a mistranslation of the latter part of verse 3; "from the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of Thy youth." This mistranslation is used by Justin Martyr, Gregory of Nyssa, Bar Salibi, and others, and by Athanasius himself in determining the symbol of the Faith.

Isaiah xxviii. 16, in combination with Psalm cxviii. 2, is a great favourite used by 1 Peter ii. 7; Romans ix. 32, 33. Justin Dialogus, c. 34 sets out to prove *inter alia* that Christ is the stone. Gregory of Nyssa and

Cyprian all use the same combination of passages.

Hosea ii. 25: "I will call that My people," etc., is used by S. Paul, Romans ix. 12; by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Cyprian.

Psalm ii. 7: "Thou art My Son," etc., coupled with 2 Samuel vii. 14, "I will be to Him a Father."

Psalm xlv. 7: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever," coupled with Psalm cii. 25, "Of old Thou has laid the foundation of the earth," etc., and with Psalm cx., "The Lord said unto My Lord."

Altogether about 100 texts from the Old Testament with their connexions, mistaken references, and other instances of use in a book form, are passed in review. It is very difficult to doubt Dr. Harris' contention that such a book existed and was in use before any New Testament writing if there is anything in circumstantial evidence; still more so if it is the strongest form of evidence.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHRIST OF FACT AND OF ROMANTIC FICTION

"*Sir, we would see Jesus.*"

The microscopic study of the Gospels; Its tendency to misrepresent by exaggeration of details.—The Church of the Second Century saved from despair by the New Testament record of Christ; that is, by the identity of Jesus with the Christ.—Separation of the two gives us the Christ of fiction; Instance from H. G. Wells' *Outline of History*: His revolutionary Jesus whose revolution collapsed; S. Paul's Christ constructed from Mithraism.—Criticism of Mr. Wells' unhistorical romance: The true revolution wrought by Christ was not of world order, but of human nature.—No true knowledge of Jesus Christ apart from the problem of sin: The sin laden conscience of Israel, B.C. 100.—A.D. 100. The apocalyptic expectations do *not* connect Messiah with pardon of sin; Connexion of death of Jesus with sin embedded in New Testament. Sanday and Headlam's note on the above; Also in the Eucharist in meaning of which S. Paul did not differ from other Apostles.—Eucharist not to be explained by "mysteries." New Testament unintelligible if sin is overlooked. Illustration from Cambridge Conference.

MODERN methods of estimating the Personality of Jesus Christ usually attempt to disentangle the real Jesus from the varying presentations afforded by different books of the New Testament. The advantage of this plan is that attention is drawn to details, often far from unimportant, which have been overlooked in studying the New Testament picture as a whole. The canvas has been microscopically worked over inch by inch, and in the process new beauties have been revealed. We have learnt something of the mind of the poor woman who said, "If I touch but His garments, I shall be made whole."—(S. Mark v. 28.) A word, a phrase, a gesture have revealed fresh glories in the portrait of Him Who was full of grace and truth. But the method has its

advantages. Even when He was on earth some reckoned Him a lunatic, others a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, others a Sabbath-breaker and a blasphemer. Criticism of character is always dangerous work; a very slight exaggeration of details, a partiality in this direction, a prejudice in that, may easily distort the truth; and nowhere more easily than in the pages of history. The Socrates of Plato was very different from the Socrates of Aristophanes, though they were both contemporaries of the sage. How much easier is such misrepresentation concerning the dead. The writer may unconsciously first frame a portrait of his own imagining, and then select the facts which fit his preconception. The historical method is a very dangerous tool, as the "lives of Jesus," in modern times can amply testify.

We suggest that there is good reason for studying the Jesus Christ of the New Testament rather than the Jesus of the Gospels or the Christ of S. Paul. For the selection of the canonical books of the New Testament was not uncritical. Other Gospels were current, and some of them enjoyed popularity. There was no need to have put S. Paul's Epistles in the same rank as the Gospels, nor to have ranked S. John with the Synoptic Gospels, no need but this, that they had made their own authority to be felt, that omission of them would have been treason to the truth, that the true Christ was, in fact, something more than the Jesus of the Synoptists. Or we may put it this way. The Church finding herself mistaken in expecting the second coming of the Lord, before the passing away of the generation that had seen Him on earth, continued for herself as best she could under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, His earthly presence, by

gathering together the words of witnesses of His first coming. In these she had the nearest possible approach to the continued presence of Jesus on earth. The testimony of these witnesses to Jesus was not a dead letter preserved to satisfy curiosity as to the origin of the Church, pages for the delectation of a Dry-as-dust. The testimony of Jesus, collected by the Church was the spirit of prophecy, the inspiring, life-giving word, in which He should live as He lived with His disciples in Galilee, but also as the Lord of Pentecostal power, a word that should again and again renew the face of the earth. How frequently has the New Testament proved itself in Church History to be a Parousia of the Lord.

For the core of the New Testament is the identity of Jesus of Nazareth with the Risen Saviour and Lord whom the Christians worshipped as God. This Christ Jesus, then as now, was "unto Jews a stumbling block and unto Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that were called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the Power of God and the Wisdom of God."—(1 Cor. i. 22, 23.) To dissolve that identification in the supposed interests of purer religion has been the intellectual snare of generations: just as bare assent to metaphysical explanations of the union of the Godhead and Manhood has been the great temptation of traditional orthodoxy. The New Testament has borne its steadfast protest against either misrepresentation. No honest reader will ever find an imperfect Christ or a dead Christ there.

Inasmuch, however, as modern research into the life of Christ has often been impelled by sincere love of truth, there is probably no simpler method of gaining a full view of New Testament teaching concerning our Lord than by reviewing some of these one-sided explana-

tions. The industry spent on them has been prodigious, light has been thrown from many quarters, the background of the New Testament narrative has been explored with great diligence, and, to its great advantage, the New Testament has been set in the frame work of its contemporary surroundings. To review all their labours thoroughly would be the work of a lifetime. In this volume no more can be attempted than the presentation of a few illustrations, in the hope that ordinary Bible readers may find in them evidence of the extraordinary firmness of the foundations on which their faith rests.

We will take, for our first instance of a "divided" Christ, that which is presented in Mr. H. G. Wells' book, which bears the somewhat pretentious name of *The Outline of History*. In the course of the outline Mr. Wells comes to the Beginnings of Christianity (pp. 281, etc.) and presents to us, as he says, "not theology, but history," not "the spiritual and theological significance of the life of Jesus, but its effects upon the political and everyday life of men." From this point of view Jesus appears as the preacher of the doctrine of the Kingdom of Heaven, "one of the most revolutionary doctrines that ever stirred and changed human thought." "God was the loving Father of all life, as incapable of showing favour as the universal sun." Thus Jesus struck at patriotism, and also at family loyalty. His "teaching condemned all the gradations of the economic system, all private wealth, all personal advantages." "Again and again He denounced private riches and the conservation of any private life." "It was not merely a moral and a social revolution that Jesus proclaimed: it is clear from a score of indications that His teaching

had a political bent of the plainest sort." "Whatsoever else the deafness and blindness of His hearers may have missed in His utterances, it is plain that they did not miss His resolve to revolutionise the world." Naturally the disciples "thought that He was just another King among the endless succession of Kings, but of a quasi-magic kind," and so eventually "the revolution collapsed utterly." He was arrested and put to death. Foolish stories were told enhancing the terrors of His death. Then presently there were whispers that He was alive, had been seen visibly in the body, had gone through the blue to God. Then "Saul of Tarsus," whom many modern writers regard as the real founder of Christianity, used doctrines of Mithraism to explain the crucifixion of Jesus. "The faith of Nazarene which he found as a doctrine of motives and a way of life, he made into a doctrine of *beliefs*. But though Christianity acquired from S. Paul a theology "it still retained much of the revolutionary and elementary quality of the teaching of Jesus. It had become somewhat more tolerant of private property; it would accept wealthy adherents without insisting upon the communisation of their property. . . It would not tolerate the godhead of Cæsar . . . it denounced gladiatorial shows. . . . Unarmed, but possessing enormous power of passive resistance, it appeared at the outset plainly as rebellion," and was persecuted by the Government.

If the rest of *The Outline of History* has as little relation as this to extant authority, the line which divides romance from history must be extraordinarily fine. No one reading the New Testament could imagine the mind of Jesus to have been so utterly preoccupied with the distribution of this world's goods. The idea that He

set out to raise a revolution to overthrow the existing social order—apparently by violence—and failed is simply grotesque. But it is hardly so grotesque as the picture of S. Paul, a Pharisee of Pharisees founding a religion on Mithraism, and using for its centre of worship the crucified revolutionary communist. What is the value of the New Testament as history, if Mr. Wells has laid hold of the truth ? or of Mr. Wells' representation, if the New Testament is " trustworthy " ? His attempt has this value. It brings out plainly for the benefit of readers, whose chief literature is the modern novel, the absolute unreality of an attempt to tell the story of Jesus, when it is wholly divested of any supernatural element, and divested also of its actual surroundings. For, in so far as there is an element of communism in the teaching of Jesus, it falls very short of the practice of the Essenes, who were His contemporaries. They were a community that actually " condemned all gradations of the economic system, all private wealth, all personal advantages." They " denounced private riches and the conservation of any private life." Even their clothes were common property. They refused family life, living in strict celibacy. They regarded " God as the father of all Life, as incapable of showing favour as the universal sun." It is true that they formed voluntary communities, and did not imagine that they could impose their doctrines by violence on the world at large. But the fact remains that the ideas which Mr. Wells makes distinctive of the teaching of Jesus were not in themselves novel. It certainly was a novelty that a young man whose followers could boast only two swords should imagine that they would revolutionise society, and not surprising that the " revolution collapsed utterly."

How unconvincing would such a story be in a romance. With all his skill in that direction Mr. Wells could not carry it through successfully. It is in effect the tale of a Palestinian Karl Marx, preaching love when his modern counterpart preached class hatred, suddenly, at a date less remote than is the death of Karl Marx, from our time, deified by the most violent, the most original, the most cultured of His opponents. No better illustration could be given of the bankruptcy of the modern attempt to go behind the New Testament than this. Mr. Wells is a man of intelligence, of wide reading, of great imaginative and constructive genius. He has behind him a century of free and untrammelled speculative enquiry into the life of Christ. He is obsessed by no orthodox prepossessions, by no ecclesiastical tendencies. He sets out to popularise the results of modern research, and to give a rational account of the beginning of Christianity. Christianity arose out of the deification of a fanatical communist by a cultured Pharisee obsessed by Mithraism. The New Testament, with all its miracles is surely more credible than that.

But we should not do justice to Mr. Wells if we did not add that there is one element of historical truth in his portrait, and that history has repeatedly proved it to be so. He has seized this point, though he has given a wrong colouring to it, that the attraction of the teaching of Jesus has always been what Schweitzer calls its world-negation. The antagonism of Jesus to riches was very real, but it was so, because they are a principal embodiment of worldliness. They do not comprise the whole of the world spirit. The cares of this world and its pleasures are as antagonistic to the spirit of Christ as its riches. No mere redistribution of riches would expel

the love of the world which is enmity against God. Nay, it would be easier to revolutionise the world distribution of wealth with two swords than to expel love of the world from the heart of man. Thus it came to pass that the cross was no fiasco, but as the Apostles perceived, and the New Testament records, part of a design to revolutionise human nature, without which revolutions of world order are worthless.

It has been worth while to criticise Mr. Wells' view for the simple reason that he frankly addresses himself to the ordinary reader whose limited time and even more limited taste for speculative theology is apt to be forgotten by modern controversialists. The ordinary Englishman wants to be up to date in his religion, but he is impatient of the labour which is necessary to reach a well-grounded faith. He forgets or has never known T. H. Green's solemn warning, "If we have come to acquiesce in such a standard of living as must make us wish God and duty to be illusions, it (*i.e.*, faith) must surely die." He is content to be told that the recent scientific authority has shattered, or the most recent theologian has established, the faith. He is still better pleased if a summary of the arguments is presented in his daily paper compressed into a few lines which too often attain ease of comprehension at the expense of accuracy of representation. How well the writer remembers, when Supernatural Religion was first published being asked if he had read it, and being assured that it had "demolished Christianity." Mr. Wells has not forgotten the needs of this class of readers.

But there is also a public which is anxious to know the truth and to take some pains about it, a public that reverences the Bible and yet wonders how much of the

Bible it may dare to believe—attracted at times by the suggestion that miracles are no essential part of the faith, at other times bewildered to know what is left of the Jesus Christ of the Apostles' Creed, if the miraculous is to be discarded, now seeking to know the historic Christ, and now dismayed to find how little certainty as to His words or deeds modern criticism has allowed to survive. For such readers it would be tedious, even had the author the competency, to examine in detail the speculations of German and English theologians of the leading schools during the last century. The real, the living Christ is not to be found there but in the New Testament, and He will be found there, as of old He was found, by those who are seeking deliverance from sin. Many of the difficulties, perhaps all the difficulties about Christ arise from superficial conceptions of sin.

The burden of sin rested heavily on the conscience of pious Israelites at the beginning of the Christian era. While part of the nation found refuge in meticulous observance of the ceremonial law, and abundant room for self-satisfaction in contrasting its righteousness with the wickedness of the Gentiles, there is abundant evidence of nobler and purer conceptions which have found their record in Jewish Apocalyptic literature contemporary with the Old Testament. The popularity of that literature among devout Israelites is reflected in the New Testament, not only in phrases and sentiments, but, above all, by our Lord's adoption of the title of Son of Man. The title belongs, indeed, to the Book of Enoch, written towards the end of the second century B.C., but read assiduously for two centuries afterwards. In that book, in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, in the second book of Baruch, in the fourth book of

Esdras, as well as in others of the same period, we find some of the best teaching of the Old Testament emphasised, we find a patient longing for a Messiah who is to introduce a reign of righteousness, and we find also the burthen of sin. It is enough to quote the well-known words of Esdras IV.: "O thou Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, the fall was not thine alone, but ours also who are thy descendants. For how doth it profit us that the eternal age is promised to us, whereas we have done the thing that brings death? And that there is foretold to us an imperishable hope, whereas we are so miserably brought to futility? And there are reserved habitations of health and safety, whereas we have dealt wickedly? And that the glory of the Most High is to defend them that live a pure life, whereas we have walked in ways most wicked?" To those who "looked for redemption in Israel" the signs were most discouraging—the impiety of the priestly party who maintained the temple indeed, but maintained it by alliance with a heathen power, and used its holy services for their own enrichment; the hypocrisy of the Pharisees cloaking a corrupt life under profession of scrupulous attachment to the law; the bitter hatred of sect against sect; the greed and fraud of commercial life; the manifest tokens, as they believed, of Divine displeasure, in the prevalence of leprosy and demoniac possession; the imminent doom overhanging Sion, that awaited only on the convenience of the Cæsars. How was all this to be reconciled with the love of God for His chosen people? Where was the promise of the Kingdom of God?

Then came the voice of one crying in the wilderness, the flocking of the multitudes to the baptism of John,

the glorious hopes excited by a national repentance—the imprisonment, the beheading of John—the collapse and deadness that follow all too quickly an immature religious revival. "The baptism of John, was it from Heaven or of men?" "We cannot tell."

So far the whole atmosphere is that which pervades the Apocalyptic literature of 100 B.C. – 100 A.D. But the feature which is quite new, wholly strange and unfamiliar, is that which connects the Messiah with the forgiveness of sin. We can find in the Apocalyptic books that God has committed the judgment of sin to the Son of Man, but we cannot find any echo of the words, "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins"—still less can we find any connection between the death of the Son of Man and the forgiveness of the sin of the whole world. This idea is foreign to the Apocalyptic writings. It is equally foreign to Philo and his school, equally foreign to the Stoics. That strange attraction which drew the sinful to Jesus, that word of authority by which He loosed the bands of sin, that same word which to this day sounds from the pages of the New Testament with the same life-giving power. Where shall we look for it outside the New Testament? "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."—(S. Matt. i. 21.) "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—(S. Luke xix. 10.) "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—(1 Tim. i. 15). "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world."—(1 John ii. 1, 2.) Where we ask again, are we to find

such a Saviour as this, except in the New Testament?

It is worth while, if we desire to know the truth, in the first place to realise how firmly the connection between the death of Jesus and the forgiveness of sin is embedded in the New Testament, and in the next how very wonderful that connection is. We are apt by tradition of our upbringing to take it for granted, and then when the tradition is disputed, to surrender it far too lightly. Confronted by the massive erudition that has been spent on New Testament research, and startled by the assertion that the connection had no place in the teaching of Jesus, but was an after-thought of the Church invented to explain away His death, we do not always ask ourselves how it came to pass that the disciples invented such an explanation, and how much was involved in it. We have connected it in our minds with one or two texts, and begin to wonder whether these have been misinterpreted.

There is a note on the subject in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans in the International Critical Series for which the late Dr. Sanday and Dr. Headlam were responsible, that is unfortunately buried, so far as ordinary New Testament readers are concerned. It is so valuable that no excuse need be offered for giving here the substance of it. It is on Romans iii. 21–26, the 25th verse is first paraphrased as follows (p. 81): "When the Messiah suffered upon the cross it was God Who set Him there as a public spectacle, to be viewed as a Mosaic sacrifice might be viewed by the crowds assembled in the Courts of the Temple. The shedding of His Blood was, in fact, a sacrifice which had the effect of making propitiation or atonement for sins, an effect which man must appreciate through

faith. The object of the whole being, by this public and decisive act to vindicate the righteousness of God. In previous ages the sins of mankind had been passed over without adequate punishment or atonement." Then in a special note (p. 91) the writers add, "It is impossible to get rid from this passage of the double idea (1) of a sacrifice; (2) of a sacrifice which is propitiatory. In any case the phrase "in His blood" carries with it the idea of sacrificial bloodshedding. . . . And further, when we ask, "Who is propitiated? the answer can only be God." Nor is it possible to separate the propitiation from the death of the Son." Then follows a summary of the evidence that the ideas of sacrifice and propitiation lie at the root of the teaching—not only of S. Paul but of the New Testament generally. We have (1) passages which directly connect the idea of blood with sacrifice, three from S. Paul, two from S. Peter, two from S. John, one from the Book of Revelation, three chapters from the Epistle to the Hebrews and our Lord's words, Matt. xxvi. 28; S. Mark xiv. 24. Many of these passages call attention to details in the act of sacrifice. Passages follow connecting the Death of Christ with several forms of Levitical sacrifices—the Passover, the Day of Atonement, the ratification of the Covenant, and the sin offering; (2) passages are referred to connecting the Death of Christ with the forgiveness of sins, S. Matthew, the Acts, several Epistles of S. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews. "The strong convergence of Apostolic writings of different and varied character seems to show us that the idea of sacrifice as applied to the death of Christ cannot be put aside as a merely passing metaphor, but is interwoven with the very weft and warp of the

primitive Christian thinking, taking its start (if we may trust our traditions) from the words of Christ Himself. What it all amounts to is that the religion of the New Testament, like the religion of the Old, has the idea of sacrifice as one of its central conceptions, not, however, scattered over an elaborate ceremonial system, but concentrated in a many-sided and far-reaching act." The note is illustrated by a quotation from a lecture of Professor Ruskin, in which he comments on the idea of Vicarious Sacrifice and its fundamental truth, and concludes with the memorable words: "This it may still be objected is but 'a fiction of mercy.' All mercy, all forgiveness is of the nature of fiction. It consists in treating men better than they deserve. And if we, being evil, exercise the property of mercy towards each other and exercise it not rarely out of consideration for the merits of someone else than the offender, shall not our Heavenly Father do the same?"

This teaching is strongly confirmed by consideration of the extreme improbability, we might safely say the impossibility, of any association of the death of the Messiah with the forgiveness of sin, except on the authority of our Lord Himself. We have already seen that the Apocalyptic literature with which pious Jews were conversant contained no such suggestion. The sacrifices ordained by the law did indeed connect the idea of a victim's death with that of atonement for sin. But those sacrifices were ordained by God, enshrined in the very heart of the Mosaic law. Which of the Apostles had the authority to set aside that law, or to insist that its ordained rites were but types now swallowed up by the antitype, shadows that had vanished before the reality? What daring is contained in the words, "The cup of

blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ?"—(1 Cor. x. 16.) The blood of the very meanest of victims it was sacrilege to consume. It is hard for us to imagine the awful profanation that lay in the words, "a communion of the blood of the Messiah." Yet S. Paul dares to use them—to use them, though he knows that his letter will be read aloud in the Church of Corinth," that among his hearers will be keen antagonists, ready to report, ready even to distort, what he has written in the ears of the Church at Jerusalem. His confidence is perfectly justified. When he meets James and the elders in Council, though it is falsely reported that he has been teaching the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, yet the crime is not that he tells them that the cup of the Lord's Supper is "a communion of the blood of the Messiah." And yet how fatal the charge, were it not that the whole Church lay open to it, and exposed itself to an accusation so horrible in the ears of the Jews among whom they lived. What reasonable account can be given of this custom, but the command of One Who claimed that He had fulfilled the law of Moses, and given it its true and fullest meaning by His death?

The attempt to explain away the force of the Eucharistic practice and tradition by a supposed borrowing from the Eleusinian mysteries has been a failure. It involved misapprehension of the mysteries (see E. L. Hicks, *Studia Biblica*, Iv. 12). It assigns to S. Paul an authority in the Church far greater than he really enjoyed. It trades upon our exceedingly limited knowledge of the various and inconsistent mystery religions of the East. Above all, it presupposes a readiness to fraternise with heathen worship, against which S. Paul protested

with even more than his usual vehemence. Why should it be impossible to drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils, if, in point of fact, it was from the cup of devils that S. Paul derived his teaching concerning the cup of the Lord? Whatever corruption of Christian teaching may have crept into the Church with converts during the latter half of the second century, whatever assimilation of rites and ideas, to use these in explanation of New Testament doctrine is sheer historical anachronism. It leads not to truth but to error.

We have then this firm groundwork that the New Testament contains teaching as to the significance of our Lord's death, for which contemporary Jewish religion affords no ground, and most of which must have seriously shocked the strong religious susceptibilities of Judaism, at once exposing the Christian community to persecution as blasphemers of the law of Moses. No reasonable suggestion has been offered—nor, indeed, can be offered—for the sudden rise of such teaching, except that it was derived from our Lord Himself. On this point more must be said hereafter. For the present we may conclude with this proposition, that no representation of Jesus Christ is really historical which does not emphasise His relation, and specially the relation of His death, to the forgiveness of sin. The real reason why all the enormous labours of the last century to discover the historical Jesus ended in "bankruptcy" was their persistent disregard of the attitude of Jesus towards sin. His freedom from all personal consciousness of sin, His violent antagonism to self-righteousness in all its forms, His tenderness to penitents, His unwearying quest for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, His readiness to lay down His life for the sheep,

His view of human helplessness in the face of sin, His confidence that His mission was the establishment of a new relation between God and sinful man, all confirmed by the experience of the Church after His death and Resurrection, these, if historic documents have any value at all, were the very groundwork of His being—the key to all understanding of His Personality. But these have been constantly overlooked by modern theologians, who, overlooking them, are surprised that their portraits of the Christ are not recognised, and that all men are not drawn to a Christ Whose cross is little more than an unmeaning suicide. The same defect attaches to not a little to the work of the churchmen who are called Modernists. In the report of the Cambridge Conference as issued by them, there is hardly any allusion to the death of Christ. The Head Master of Sherborne admits that "for many centuries the answer of almost all Christians to the question, "What was or is the work of Jesus?" might be summed up in the words Atonement and Salvation, but he thinks it best to leave this answer alone, and to describe the master-purpose of the life of Jesus in other words, and to say, "If I must put my thought crudely it (whatever it is) Resurrection, Atonement, Redemption is what God did or does, and though, as far as I understand it, I assent to the proposition that Jesus is God, yet God in that proposition is to me an adjective." A nebulous conclusion, not likely to have carried much comfort to the heart of the paralytic or the sinful woman. Dr. Rashdall does not approach the question. Canon Tollinton contributes a paper on Jesus as revealer of God, but reserves "the bearing of the death of Christ on His revelation of God" for another paper, which does not seem to have been read. Dr. Bethune Baker goes as far as to admit that

"any doctrine that claims to be Christian must safeguard the conviction that the activity of redeeming love the action of sacrifice—is the very centre of reality, but finds it "difficult to translate this picture into scientific theology without becoming tritheistic." At the same time he makes the effort more successfully than some of his friends, because of the place which he assigns to redeeming love in his conception of Christ. The effort of the Conference was to be constructive and to present a teaching on the person of Christ more rational and up to date than that which is presented in the Creeds. This was accomplished by entire avoidance of the great problem of sin, to the consideration of which not one session, nor even one paper was devoted. It is not surprising that the problem of Our Lord's Divinity was found to present great difficulties. That God should trouble Himself about man—still more that He should become man, if man is really able to rise to the height of his own ideals is unintelligible. That there should be room for God at all under such conditions is almost as unintelligible. If we would know God, if we would know the Christ of God, we must know ourselves.

The Roman soldiers in mockery clad Jesus in a purple robe and crown of thorns, and Pilate presented Him so clad with the words "Behold the Man." Not in mockery—far from it—but desiring to glorify Him, philosophers for centuries have tried to clothe Him with the scholar's robe and to crown Him with flowery garlands crying once more, "Behold the Man." But the Jesus of history eludes them. Wearing His own raiment crowned with the glory of the Son of God, the Sinners' Friend still chooses the road to Golgotha, still prays for His murderers, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

CHAPTER V

THE CHRIST OF FACT AND OF FICTION (*continued*)

Efforts to bring Christian doctrine into line with philosophy : Difficulty of disinterested criticism ; The School of *T. H. Green* of Oxford : The idea the reality ; Illustrative extract.—Green's History, on which his philosophy rests, questioned : S. Paul not Philonian nor Stoic ; S. John not derived from Philo ; S. Paul's own statement as to his sources ; Faith in a Christ manifested in time and space.—*Eucken*—his position : Illustrative extracts ; Was Christ the Founder of a religion ? Christ without miracles a Christ of personal imagination.—*Rashdall* : The Christ Who is like God, and a disclosure of God ; The *supreme* incarnation of God ; Is it right to worship Him ? Is His redemptive work a real necessity ? Recent world experiences.

To the conception of Christ in Mr. Wells' *The Outline of History*, we have opposed the Christ of the New Testament. We have found no revolutionary fanatic, but One Who in sober earnest set about establishing the Kingdom of God through the reconciliation between God and man wrought by the Cross. Though Mr. Wells' version of the Origins of Christianity has been taken first, he was not, of course, a pioneer in modern Christology. Three-quarters of a century have been spent in reconstructing " the Christ " with infinite labour and massive learning, and the output of literature has been such as to remind us of the words, " The world itself could not contain the books that have been written," or which might be written in reply. An exhaustive treatment is quite beyond the resources of the writer, and it may be asked whether any other treatment should be offered to the public. From the viewpoint of this work it seems to be sufficient to notice three serious efforts which have been made in all good faith to simplify Christian doctrine

and to bring it into line with modern philosophy. Any one of them, if accepted, would seriously modify, or altogether dissolve the Christian doctrine of atonement, and consequently the faith of Evangelical Churchmen. They are not works of opponents of Christianity, but of would-be defenders, works of men of sincere piety and goodwill. They represent different stages in the progress of modern inquiry. Attention to them has been a duty. With what success that duty has been performed others must judge.

It is possible, indeed, that a deep spiritual conviction is a disqualification for such exercises. The man whose religious life is built upon the experience of peace with God through the Cross may do his best to give an impartial hearing to gospels that make no real room for such experience, but he can hardly go back on his experience. He is disqualified certainly for the office of judge or umpire. But he is not disqualified from giving reasons, apart from his own conviction, for rejecting theories which would make it void. He may state his grounds of refusal, in such a way as to show that he has tried to do justice to the other side. It is always possible that even on that other side there are prejudices in some way comparable with his own, mental attitudes that have biassed the judgment even of philosophic minds. For the more confirmation of believers, for guidance to enquirers, each must do his best in the great quest of Truth.

The three writers whom it is proposed to submit to examination are Professor T. H. Green, Professor Eucken and Dr. Rashdall. In all cases writers have been selected with reference to whom the writer had, at various times, been consulted. Otherwise, on account of their goodwill

as well as their philosophic eminence, he would have shrunk from any criticism of them.

Professor T. H. Green, of Cromwellian descent and the son of a clergyman, played a most conspicuous part in Oxford more than half a century ago. In days when the schools of J. S. Mills and of the Positivists were in the ascendant, he was the exponent of Christian Hegelianism, and the inspirer of the Christian philosophy associated with the names of Aubrey Moore, Scott Holland, and J. R. Illingworth. Dr. Rashdall has quite recently owned T. H. Green as his master. It is not suggested that this school accepted all the philosophy or theology of their teacher. But he started them on their line of enquiry. Other pupils of his worked out very different conclusions. Green was a man whose pure life and exalted ideas of public duty and service, as well as his inspiring teaching, will make his name a landmark in Oxford for many generations to come. In one respect he was unfortunate, namely, that he belonged to an age when New Testament criticism was still under the influence of the Tubingen School. He speaks, for instance, of the fourth Gospel as written in the second century A.D., two generations after the death of S. Paul *(III., 242), and sets light store by the evidence of the other Gospels (III., 866). To him it is merely "transmitted evidence." It is not likely, however, that he would have seriously changed his position, had he lived to know the results of modern New Testament investigations, for he rejected all breaks in the continuity of nature as fatal to the very idea of a reasoned knowledge of nature, and by these breaks he meant "all miracles."

Professor Green's teaching was that the "ideas" embodied in the story of Christ were spiritual ideas of

* Works of T. H. Green.

the utmost truth and value: that these ideas were grasped by faith—*i.e.*, by spiritual intuition, and must be lived out in our lives with supreme devotion. The ideas were the real truth of Christianity, and the indwelling Christ its life, but the historical events were immaterial, and so far as they were what we call miraculous they were contrary to reason and, consequently, untrue. His most emphatic protest was directed against making faith to be "dependent on propositions concerning past events" (III., 263). Such faith, he holds, makes no difference to the character, and is really untrue to the Pauline conception of faith. It is best, however, to allow Professor Green to speak for himself, and not to base our criticisms on our own interpretation of his teaching. No apology, therefore, is needed for the long extract which follows:

"There came one who spake as never man spake, yet proclaimed himself the son of man, and was conscious in the very meanness of human life, in its final shame of death, of the communication of God to himself, and through himself to mankind. There came another, who bringing with him certain metaphysical conceptions, the result of the philosophy of the time, found them in this man, whom death could not hold, suddenly become real: who in spirit, yet with a light above the brightness of the sun, saw manifested in him that which Philo and the Stoics knew must be: even the heavenly man, in whose death all barriers were broken down, that all in the participation of his life might be equal before God. 'The riches of the glory of this mystery,' he preached among the Gentiles, even 'Christ in them, the hope of glory.' Thus, in sober ecstacy, with visions and revelations and speaking with tongues—in upper chambers

where men breaking bread at their common social meals felt that Christ was among them, and that it was his body that they were breaking and communicating—by the foolishness of preaching he founded the Christian Churches. In a generation or two the intuition of the present Christ, which Paul even in his lifetime seems to have been unable to convey to others as it was to himself, had faded away. In its stead came the belief in past events, or in present mysterious transactions, external to the man, which had to be stated in a creed. . . . Thus Christ, if I may use the expression, was gradually externalised and mystified. The miraculous overpowered the moral and spiritual, as much as in the view of S. Paul the moral and the spiritual overpowered the miraculous. . . . Yet when it might have been thought that the life of Christ must already have ceased to be a spiritual process and become a wonder of the past—more, probably, than two generations after S. Paul had gone to his rest—there arose a disciple, whose very name we know not (for he sought not his own glory and preferred to hide it under the repute of another) who gave that final spiritual interpretation to the person of Christ, which has for ever taken it out of the region of history and of the doubts that surround all past events, to fix it in the purified conscience as the immanent God. The highest result of ancient philosophy had been the conception of the world as a system of thought, related to God as his word or expression, *i.e.*, as the spoken thought is related to man. This conception, however, great as it was, did not present God under moral attributes, nor did it bring him near to the conscience of the individual. But in Christ, the writer whom the Church calls S. John, saw this Divine thought manifesting itself

in human life as truth and love, and that not merely or fully through a past visible existence—though such existence had been vouchsafed as a sign—but through a spirit which should dwell in men, drawn out of the world, won from sense and the flesh, for ever" (III., 242.)

We have here a tangled skein of history and philosophy which needs to be unravelled, if we would reach the truth. Whatever the value of the philosophy might have been if the history had been otherwise, it is as much at the mercy of history as any creed of the Church.

Now the history presents to us S. Paul as one of the twin founders of Christianity, "one of the two parents of our faith" is Professor Green's phrase (III., p. 164). That S. Paul never thought of himself in this light would no doubt have been admitted by Professor Green. Although S. Paul claims to have received his Gospel by revelation, he nowhere speaks of it as other than the Gospel which the rest of the Apostles preached. The mystery to which he so often alludes is the mystery of the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in Christ, the admission of the Gentiles as "fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the Body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel."—(Eph. iii. 6.) Now that this should be a mystery at all, and especially a mystery that constantly fills the Apostle with amazement, brings into clear relief the thoroughly Hebraic and Rabbinic cast of S. Paul's mind, and his complete alienation from "the metaphysical conceptions, the result of the philosophy of the time." It is no doubt true that some of the teaching of S. Paul has its counterpart in the teaching of Philo, and that those were common elements in Rabbinic teaching and in Stoic philosophy. But to describe S. Paul as imbued with

the metaphysical conceptions of his time is historically inaccurate, and seriously inaccurate. Canon Burney, in his *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, disputes the indebtedness even of the author of the fourth Gospel to Alexandrine influence. He writes (p. 127) "His" (*i.e.*, of the author of the Fourth Gospel) "Logos-doctrine is the development of conceptions enshrined in the Targums, and is not derived from Philo. . . . Could New Testament scholars ever have arrived at any other conclusion, if they had approached the subject with an adequate Semitic, as well as Greek, equipment? Not, indeed, that Palestinian Rabbinism was wholly uninfluenced by Greek thought; the Midrashim prove the contrary. Yet, when this is admitted, Palestinian Jewish thought is one thing, Alexandrine Hellenistic thought another. It may be true that there is an ultimate connection between the Logos-conception of Philo and that of the Gospel-prologue; but this connection is no closer than is implied by a common parentage. Philo's doctrine was in no sense the moulding influence of our author's thought."

There is no reason to suppose that Professor Green had any acquaintance with Palestinian Rabbinism. It was still unexplored country in his days. Yet its importance as affecting not only the thought of S. Paul, but also the teaching of our Lord Himself, is gradually being forced on our attention. We shall see more of this presently. But we must now proceed to point out the strange gap between the crucifixion of our Lord and S. Paul's preaching of the heavenly man. No attempt is made in the passage before us to connect the two. Yet connection there was none unless as S. Paul taught, saying that he had himself received it, "Christ died for

our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."—(1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.) If these were not actual facts S. Paul was the victim of hallucinations which seriously discredit those spiritual experiences on which so much stress is laid in the passage before us. If there were no "past events," if the communication of God to Jesus Christ was only a consciousness personal to Himself, then was Paul the Pharisee guilty of blasphemy in the worship that he paid to Jesus Christ, and the author of the fourth Gospel equally guilty of blasphemy when he wrote "the Word was God." There seems to be no escape from this conclusion if we try to reproduce to our minds the world in which our Lord and His Apostles moved. They lived and taught, not in the Academy of Athens, where any new teaching, any new god, was assured of a welcome, as a subject of discussion. But they lived in the narrow streets of Jerusalem, or moved among the synagogues of Judaism, where men were alert with fiery expectation of the Messiah, keen to detect unorthodoxy and swift to punish it. It was there that the life of Christ was lived, there that he died the felon's death, there, first of all, that faith in Him burst forth with such surprising energy that it had to be repressed with persecution, in which persecution Paul himself led the van. The philosophy that would give us the meaning of Christianity must take account of these facts.

One word must be added before we pass on to Professor Eucken. Great importance is attached, and rightly attached, by Professor Green to the intuition of faith, and to the uselessness of assent to intellectual propositions as a power to form the character. This truth is

not overlooked in two of our great Creeds. The Quicunque vult is a series of intellectual propositions to disbelief of which the punishment of eternal death is assigned. But the Quicunque vult does not belong to the earlier days of Christianity. The two earlier creeds express a personal faith. I believe in God the Father. I believe in Jesus Christ. I believe in the Holy Ghost. But every person has a character and a history; and although the word "Person" is unfortunate as applied to God, yet is it equally true that the God in whom I believe must be a self-manifesting God, or else my knowledge of Him will consist in bare negations. If, further, any part of that manifestation has been—as, in fact, it must have been or it were no manifestation to me—under conditions of time and space, then will the glorious truth attendant on that manifestation, assist my thoughts to conceive Him and my faith to lay firm hold on Him, Whom not having seen I love, and yet love not as a barren abstraction, but as the God "Who so loved me that He gave Himself for me." If I sincerely love any being, love demands that I should know all that I can know about him, and not merely love myself projected into him.

Professor Eucken was a pupil of Hegel, but departed from the teaching of his master in search of a larger freedom for the self than could be found in Hegelian Pantheism. His system has been described as "a negative movement from a self-centred, self-enslaved individuality to a God-centred personality, a movement from the sense-world to the self, and through the self inwardly to God (as) the assertion and the salvation of our true self-hood."—(Rudolf Eucken's *Philosophy of Life*, by Gibson, p. 20.) His teaching is profoundly

religious and sympathetic with Christianity. But he, too, has no room for the miraculous, and is therefore compelled to construct a Christ of his own independently of the Gospels. He writes thus (*The Problem of Human Life*, translated by W. S. Hough, p. 169): "When so much depends upon the personality of the founder, it was an incalculable advantage for Christianity, giving it a great superiority over all other religions, to be based upon the life and being of a personality which was raised so high and so securely above the lower things of human nature, and above the antagonisms which ordinarily cleave life in twain. There appears here, united with homely simplicity, an unfathomable profundity: united with a grateful gladness, a great seriousness; and united with most perfect sincerity of heart and tenderness of feeling, a mighty zeal for holy things, and an invincible courage for battle with the hostile world. Trust in God and love for man are here bound together in an inseparable unity; the highest good is here at once a secure possession and an endless task. All utterance has the fragrance of the most delicate poetry; it draws its figures from the simple occurrences in surrounding nature, which it thereby ennobles; nowhere is there extravagance or excess, such as at once attracts and repels us in Oriental types; instead, an exalted height of pure humanity in the form of pronounced individuality affecting us with a marvellous sense of harmony. And this personality, by its tragic experience, is at the same time a prototype of human destiny, whose impressive pathos must be felt even by the most hardened mind. . . . The immediate expectation of the Kingdom of God made Jesus indifferent to all questions of mere civilisation and of the social order; hence on these

questions neither sanction nor counsel can be expected from him. This separates him from those to whom the development of civilisation is the chief substance and sole aim of human existence; it tends only the more to attract to him those who perceive the inadequacy of all mere civilisation, and who see in the secure establishing of a new world upon the fundamental relation of man to the Infinite and Eternal the only possible salvation of the soul."

The contrast with Professor Green is here very marked. Eucken has no "two parents of our faith." Jesus stands alone, and His Personality is high above that of all other founders of religions. He builds his description of Christ on the Gospels; he feels the power not only of the purity, meekness and goodness of Jesus, but also the power of His other-worldliness. As he writes a little further on, "Not only by His teaching, but still more by his life and sufferings he created a breach with the immediate world; he deprived it and all its goods of value; he compelled men to look beyond it, and implanted in them an imperishable longing for a new world." He even concludes this passage with reference to the very words from which we set out: "Even our very necessary efforts for a renewal of Christianity, for a more active and more universal Christianity, such as are being made to-day with ever-increasing effect, do not need to break with Jesus; rather, even they place themselves in the service of the truth revealed by Him, and with full conviction appropriate the saying of Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Where so much has been well and truly written, and in view of the fact that Eucken holds that Christianity

is " the Religion of Religions," and that its true meaning is " the presence of the Divine within the spiritual life itself," that it is an inward, personal and spiritual experience," it is disappointing indeed that Eucken cannot take that one step further which makes all the difference, that he cannot accept Christ as Lord and God. But this last step he absolutely refuses to take. Christ is to him a wonderful Personality, and founder of the truest and most wonderful of all religions. But He is not the mediator between God and man. When we turn to the New Testament we find no trace of any attempt by our Lord to found a new religion. He has come into the world not to found a religion, but to found the Kingdom of God ; to bear witness to the Truth, to bear witness to the Father. He does not separate Himself from the synagogue or the Temple, nor does He command His disciples to separate themselves. They do not speak of themselves as teachers of a religion but as belonging to " a way "—a way of life, and as witnesses of the deeds and words of the Lord Jesus till His coming again. The fundamental misconception in Eucken's work is that he regards Christ as the author of a new religion. It is true that he rises often above this level, and perceives, writing before the war, the danger in which the civilised world stood from loss of spiritual ideals, and spiritual values, and seeks to find in the Christian Church, in spite of its archaic evidential form, the nucleus for the restoration of the world. His warnings fell for the most part of deaf ears, though multitudes of students, and among them world leaders, flocked to hear his lectures. The one thing needful was missing. He could not, with S. Paul, preach Christ crucified and Christ risen.

We have before us one more instance of the impossibility of discovering the power of Jesus Christ apart from His redemptive work. When that is set aside, each man who tries to construct the Christ of history really produces the Christ of his own imagination. As Hermann remarks in his *Eucken and Bergson*, p. 117, "Renan's Jesus reveals Renan more than Jesus. Hausrath's Jesus is the wise and benignant rabbi, emitting brilliant aphorisms which strike home even to the blasé mind of the nineteenth century; and there we have Hausrath's own somewhat amateurish and shallow mind. For Matthew Arnold Christ is sweetness and light, speaks with the accent of a pleasantly pessimistic culture, looks at us out of wistful eyes, full of a vague, intellectual pain, and we recognise the Greek soul of Arnold singing beneath a half-accepted Cross. Caird's Jesus is a poetical Hegelian; Seeley's a moralist touched with emotion." But that which cries out to us from the pages of the New Testament is the triumph song of a great redemption, an experience realised at the foot of the Cross not by Paul only, but equally by Peter, and James and John, and by the Churches to whom their letters were written, a triumph song which rises to its highest pitch in the hour of persecution. Then it is that earth's music is drowned by the full orchestra of the heavens, "Worthy is the Lamb that had been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honour, and glory and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them I heard saying, 'Unto Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory and the dominion for ever and

ever.' And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped." (Rev. v. 13, 14.) That was the Christ of Power, but dare we think of Him as a merely human Christ?

It remains to comment briefly on the most recent attempt to explain the Personality of Christ, that which was made by Dr. Rashdall at the Cambridge Conference of Modern Churchmen. Dr. Rashdall there represented Jesus as a man in whom the self-revelation of God, begun in the great ethical teachers and founders of religions, became signal, supreme, unique. "That we are justified in thinking of God as like Christ, that the character and teaching of Christ contains the fullest disclosure both of the character of God Himself and of His will for man—that is (so far as a momentous truth can be summed up for us in a few words) the true meaning for us of the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ."—(Rashdall, *Modern Churchman*, Sept., 1921, p. 283.) It is right to add that Dr. Rashdall refuses to think of "divine" and "human" as mutually exclusive terms, and insists "that all human minds are reproductions in limited modes . . . of the Divine mind, and that in all true human thinking there is a reproduction of Divine thought" (p. 218). For him "it would be impossible to maintain that God is incarnate in Christ and not in any one else" (p. 282), but he holds that in Christ is the "supreme incarnation" (p. 282) of God. He does not explicitly deny the miracles of the Incarnation and the Resurrection. Neither does he affirm them in the paper from which we have quoted.

Let us deal with this position. It rests on an attempt to minimise the difference between God and man. But there is a point at which the distinction between the two

natures is definite and admits of no sort of confusion. It is the duty of man to worship God; it is sinful to worship man. Is it our duty, or is it sinful, to worship Jesus Christ? To this question there is apparently no answer in Dr. Rashdall's paper. It does not even seem to have been considered. Yet it is surely vital. There are words of Professor Eucken (quoted in E. Hermann's *Eucken and Bergson*, p. 110) which seem to state the problem with undeniable force. "Between God and man there is no intermediate form of being for us, for we cannot sink back into the old cult of heroes. If Jesus is therefore not God, if Christ is not the second person in the Trinity, then He is man; not a man like any average person among ourselves, but still man. We can therefore honour Him as a leader, a hero, a martyr; but we cannot bend ourselves to Him, or root ourselves in Him; we cannot submit to Him unconditionally, still less can we make Him the centre of a cult. To do so from our point of view would be nothing else than an intolerable deification of a human being."

Presumably Dr. Rashdall would reply that "in Jesus that which was human was absolutely human, while that in Him which was divine was absolutely divine."—(*Modern Churchman*, p. 284), but that does not help us to understand how in our worship of the Christ we are to worship the divine in Him, and refuse worship to the human, or, it may be, to worship the divine in Him, but not in other men. Worship under such conditions becomes not an act of devotion, but a very strenuous metaphysical exercise.

We are brought back to realities, and we must come to a decision. The Christ of the New Testament is God, and is to be worshipped as God. There is no getting

away from this fact, and it is this line which is the dividing line between the historic Christ and the Christs of fiction. Christ came, indeed, to reconcile us to God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."—(2 Cor. v. 19.) But the need of reconciliation is there. The Cross declares that need. Man's inability to work out the righteousness of God declares that need. The facts of human nature declare it. The theology of the prosperous years at the close of the nineteenth century found the New Testament teaching of the corruption of human nature exaggerated, and loved to believe that with more culture, more refinement, better education and similar devices, a new world might soon be ushered in, a world in which sin and salvation would be coarse archaisms, and a Saviour of mankind superfluous. Religion faded into speculation, lost all note of authority, and wondered that, having become so rational, it had also become so unattractive. Though the twentieth century has discovered how thin the veneer of civilisation is, it is still far from having discovered its need of the Cross of Christ. Till that discovery is made, it will continue to draw portraits of phantom Christs, but the day will surely dawn once more upon the world in which will be fulfilled and understood the words, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."—(S. John, xii. 32.)

Note.

Dr. Rashdall, in his *Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology*, pp. 439–443, criticises Dr. Denney's attempt to explain the necessity of teaching a "vicarious" character in the death of Christ if it is to be regarded as a "demonstration of love." To illustrate his meaning

Dr. Denney used a metaphor to this effect. If I am sitting by the sea and someone comes and jumps into the water to show his love for me, the action is unintelligible : whereas if I am drowning and he springs into the water and is drowned in saving me, then I should say, " Greater love hath no man than this." On which Dr. Rashdall's comment is " The truer representation of the matter would be not to picture Christ as saying, " To show my love to you I will jump into the sea," but " To show My love for you I will allow Myself to be thrown into the sea by those who have threatened to do so unless I abandon My work of preaching what I believe to be the truth of God, of preparing the way for His Kingdom and for your admission thereto." It does not seem to have occurred to Dr. Rashdall that his alternative exactly fits the case of Socrates, who allowed himself to be poisoned rather than to give up his work of teaching ; but there is no sign that even Xenophon or Plato imagined that Socrates had died for them, still less that they were under any obligation of self-surrender to Socrates. We can hardly imagine that had Socrates risen from the dead the obligation would have suggested itself. Yet, if we understand Dr. Rashdall rightly, he holds that in Socrates there is an incarnation of God different in degree not in kind from His incarnation in Christ. When Dr. Rashdall further says, " His (the death of Christ) has been more to Christendom than other martyr-deaths, just because He was so much more than other martyrs, because His life was more than other lives," he may safely be challenged to produce a single passage from the New Testament in which the death of Christ is spoken of as a " martyr-death." It is spoken of as a " propitiation " and a " sacrifice," terms that

are consistent with vicarious suffering. Very real and profound are the mysteries involved in the death of Christ. But it is the Christ of the New Testament Who, being lifted up, has drawn all men to Himself. The appeal of the Cross is to the heart, and the heart has its own reasons which cannot always be explained philosophically.

CHAPTER VI

THE ENDURING AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

The Prophecy. S. Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.—The unfulfilled expectation of the Lord's return in the 1st century.—The fulfilled prophecy of His enduring words.—The unbounded authority claimed for Christ.—The limits arising from human resistance.—The new force in the world (Eucken).—Confirmed by Warde Fowler.—Loyalty to the living Lord: Its manifestation, 1, Under the Roman Empire; 2. Under the Barbarian invasions; 3. In mediæval Church; 4. The Reformation; 5. Missionary enterprise to-day.—The unending chain of subjects to Christ.

In the closing days of His earthly life it is recorded that our Lord uttered two prophecies in one breath, of which, so far as we can judge, one has not been fulfilled, and the other has. They were uttered with all solemnity. "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."—(S. Matt. xxiv. 34, 35.) When He spoke it was understood by those who heard Him, and was for a long time the expectation of the Church, that His second coming to judge the world would occur before the whole generation of His hearers had died. We must either assume that His words were misinterpreted, or that He was mistaken as to that day and hour, of which He Himself said that it was known to no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither to the Son, but to the Father only.—(S. Matt. xxiv. 36.) No doubt many of the signs which He foretold had their fu filment in the fall of Jerusalem before that generation passed away. This explanation does not, however, cover the words, "*all* these things be accomplished." Other

explanations have been offered such as the insertion in the Lord's words of a Jewish Apocalypse. But candour seems to demand that we should admit that in the fulfilment of His Messianic Mission our Lord shared the expectation of many of His contemporaries of a very speedy coming of the end of the age.

The more fully and unreservedly this admission is made, the more startling is His prediction that though "Heaven and earth passed away His words should not pass away." For He claimed thereby for them a Divine authority and permanency. He could not have been unaware of the prophetic words, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever."—(Is. xl. 8.) This quality of endurance beyond time itself, made for His words by Jesus, should in all ordinary expectation have been disproved, when the first part of His prophecy was disproved. Various attempts have been made to fix the date of our Lord's second coming. History has falsified them, and with the falsification have perished the other words of the prophets. That our Lord's words should have survived the first half of the second century A.D., that they should have survived all the intervening ages is in itself a proof that the world has found in Him more than a discredited Messiah. How much more it is the object of the present enquiry to show.

If the usual course of examining the contents of the Gospels to demonstrate the contents of our Lord's consciousness is not followed here, this is partly because the work has been done thoroughly and repeatedly, and partly because it is doubtful whether, after all, human measures or analysis can sum up the consciousness of One in Whom two natures, the Divine and human, were

united. But somewhat in this direction we hope to attempt in a later chapter. Nevertheless this process of analysis needs caution if it is not to take the Christian faith at a disadvantage. It far too easily lends itself to the dissection of a dead Christ, Whose span of life was completed in some 30 brief years, and recorded only fragmentarily. Whereas the Christian faith is that Jesus lives—not in a remote far-off heaven—though He be seated at the right hand of the Power of the Majesty on high—but lives with us all the days, exerting His authority, performing signs and wonders, working out His Father's will. That the New Testament assigns to Him authority of every kind is beyond dispute—authority to teach, authority to forgive sins, authority over evil spirits, authority over winds and waves, authority to heal diseases, authority to raise the dead, authority to read the secrets of men's hearts, authority to rule the Church, authority to rule the nations with a rod of iron, authority so vast that He is represented as saying, "All authority hath been given unto Me in Heaven and on earth."—(S. Matt. xxviii. 18.) If there is any truth in these claims, we shall not need to adjust them by balancing one evangelist against another, nor by subtle disputations as to the limits of "Q."* His authority, if there is any truth in His words, must loom large in the pages of history. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

We shall not, of course, forget that the authority of Christ, though He is omnipotent, does not mean that

* "Q" is the name given by critics to a supposed document containing mainly sayings of Christ which is thought to be the source of many of the sayings and discourses in the First and Third Gospels.

God will treat men as slaves, and compel them to obedience. Such obedience would be morally worthless. The first coming of Christ left room for unbelief, and malignant opposition which crowned its efforts by the crucifixion. While we look forward to a day in which there shall be no more sin, that day has not yet come. It is enough, if the interval shows, that in spite of opposition the Kingship of Christ in the world has been a reality. As to the opposition its character is well summed up by Dr. Bigg in his *Origins of Christianity* (p. 511). (The obstacle which prevents Christianity from gaining a perfect triumph) " is in fact human nature, which is older than either Christianity or Paganism, and at all times stubbornly resists any invasion of its ancient claims. Not necessarily the malignity of human nature, for even Decius and Valerian were not malignant, nor necessarily the stupidity of human nature, for Galen and Plotinus were not stupid. But sometimes its animalism, its lusts ; sometimes its individualism, its covetousness ; sometimes its inertia or hatred of change even for the better ; sometimes its one-sided experience, the philospoher in his comfortable study or his secluded laboratory forgetting his solidarity with the ignorant and suffering masses outside. Thus zeal or jealousy corrupts the Church, and weakens though it cannot destroy her energy, while it keeps the world in its contented alienation."

Subject, then, to the resistance of such forces as these, and the freedom allowed to human choice, our object is to test the reality of the personal authority of Christ in history. The very enterprise will by some be deemed unscientific, for the idea of historical evolution is frequently assumed to mean such a constant sequence of

natural cause and effect in human affairs, as to exclude spiritual agency. But such a view is sheer determinism, paralysing all creative and redemptive energy, and constantly contradicted by history. Will has always been a determining factor in human affairs. What we have to show is the presence of a Will more than human, a living and active factor in developing the Kingdom of God upon earth in the Christian era. To use the words of Professor Eucken (*Christianity and the New Idealism*, p. 51, translated by L. J. and and W. R. Gibson) we are setting out to ask, "How came it to pass that this particular point of time [the beginning of Christianity] was the fountain head of so mighty a movement that old ideals were shattered, that the whole previous balance of life was upset and previous standards failed to satisfy, that a mighty longing took possession of mankind, a stormy unrest which even now, after hundreds of years is not allayed? Is not this a proof that new sources were unsealed, new currents set in motion, that the whole life of a higher Order became wonderfully near and intimate, overwhelming, forceful, and penetrating?" Space forbids anything more than the selection of a few instances. Where possible these instances shall be selected from histories rather than from professedly theological works.

Our first reference shall be to the late Professor Warde Fowler's *Religious Experience of the Roman People*, an eminently appreciative and sympathetic study of Roman religions (p. 465):

"To sum up what I have been saying, there were certain ingredients in the Roman soil, deposits of the Roman religious experiences which were in their several ways favourable to the growth of a new plant. There

were also certain direct legacies from the old Roman religion, of which Christianity could dispose with profit, in the shape of forms of ritual, and, what was even of greater value, words of real significance in the old religion, which were destined to become of permanent and priceless value in the Christian speech of the Western nations. . . . And yet, all this taken together, so far from explaining Christianity, does not help us much in getting to understand even the conditions under which it grew into men's minds as a new power in the life of the soil. The plant, though grown in the soil which had born other crops, was wholly new in structure and vital principle. I say this deliberately, after spending so many years on the study of the religion of the Romans, and making myself acquainted in some measure with the religions of other people. The essential difference as it appears to me as a student of the history of religion is this, that whereas the connection between morality and religion has so far been a loose one—at Rome, indeed, so loose, that many have refused to believe in its existence—the *new religion was itself morality*, but morality consecrated and raised to a higher power than it had ever yet reached. It becomes active instead of passive; mere good nature is replaced by a doctrine of universal love; *pietas* the sense of duty in outward things becomes an enthusiasm embracing all humanity, consecrated by such an appeal to the conscience as there had never been in the world before—the appeal to the life and death of the Divine Master. This is what is meant, if I am not mistaken, by the great contrast so vividly drawn by S. Paul between the spirit and the flesh, between the children of light and the children of darkness, between the sleep or death of the world and the waking to life in

Christ, between the blameless and harmless sons of God, and the crooked and perverse generation among whom they shine as lights in the world. I confess that I never realised this contrast fully or intelligently until I read the Pauline Epistles from beginning to end with a special historical object in view. It is useful to be familiar with the life and literature of the two preceding centuries, if only to be able to realise the better in passing to S. Paul a Roman citizen, a man of education and experience, the great gulf between the old and new as he himself saw it. But historical knowledge, knowledge of the Roman society of the day, study of the Roman religious experience, cannot do more than give us a little help; they cannot reveal the secret. History can explain the progress of morality, but it cannot explain its consecration. With S. Paul the contrast is not merely one of good and bad, but of the spirit and the flesh, of life and death. No mere contemplation of the world around him could have kindled the fervency of spirit with which this contrast is by him conceived and expressed. Absolute devotion to the life and death of the Master, apart even from His work and teaching (of which, indeed, S. Paul says little) this alone can explain it. The love of Christ is the entirely new power that has come into the world; not merely as a type of morality, but as a *Divine influence transfiguring human nature in a universal* love. The passion of S. Paul's appeal lies in the consecration of every detail of it to the life and death of his Master; and the great contrast is for him with the Stoics between the universal law of nature and those who rebel against it; not as with Lucretius between the blind victims of the *religio* and the indefatigable student of the *rerum natura;* not as in

the *Æneid* between the man who bows to the decrees of fate, destiny, God, whatever we choose to call it, and the wilful rebel, victim of his own passions ; not as with the Roman state and family between the man who performs religious duties and the man who wilfully neglects them—between *pius* and *impius ;* but between the universal law of love focussed and consecrated in the love of Christ, and the sleep, the darkness, of a world that will not recognise it."

The length of this quotation will not be resented by those who recognise the profound scholarship and sincerity of the writer, and the directness of its bearing, though written from a wholly different point of view, on our argument. For it brings out with singular clearness the distinctive character of the Christian faith as loyalty to, and love of, a living Lord. Ritual, creed, ethical standards, organisation, philosophy, and all other ordinary appurtenances of a religion grew up in the Christian Church, and were profoundly affected by the surroundings of the Church, at times they were even taken to be the whole content of Christianity. But always behind these there flamed in devout hearts " the love of Christ," not " love copied from His love," nor yet love that He commanded as a duty, but the love of Christ as S. Paul knew it when he cried, " That life which I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me " (Gal. ii. 20), not again the Christ of a dead and remote past, rousing a romantic enthusiasm, but the " Christ Who liveth in me."

Among the evidences of the authenticity of the living Christ none is more marked than the refusal of the Church under the Empire to accept the position of one

of the tolerated religions. True to her Lord she resisted faithfully the temptation which was presented to Him; "The Kingdoms of the world and the glory of them I will give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me."—(S. Matt. iv. 8, 9.) The first two centuries of the Christian era were not irreligious nor intolerant. On the contrary, great pains were taken by many of the Emperors to vitalise the old Roman religion. Temples were restored, sacrifices freely offered, public and private acts of religion scrupulously observed. For those whom the old superstitions did not avail philosophers laboured strenuously to inculcate belief in one God, a high ethical standard and a hope of immortality. To appease the conscience of stricken souls that desired peace with God and communion with Him, the worship of Isis and Mithra put forth a sacramental system and ceremonies which strove to satisfy mystical and devotional instincts. Christianity did not owe its ultimate victory to the unbelief of the world to which its gospel came.

But it was an outcast offset of Judaism, the worship of a crucified sophist which cut its adherents off from the performance of religious duties, from ties of family life, from social observances and amenities, and, above all, from recognising the divine majesty of the State. This position of the new faith would have been natural enough had it confined itself to the race which gave it birth. But that which must have seemed intolerable was that it claimed to be not merely an exclusive religion, as Judaism was exclusive, but also universal, a world religion which deliberately intended to supplant and supersede all other religions. From the imperial point of view its suppression was more than a wise policy:

it was a vital necessity. But the Empire fell, and the Church survived.

Far more marvellous than the survival and triumph of the Church was the survival of the spirit of Christ among some of its members. The late Dr. Mozley, in a sermon on the text, "My Kingdom is not of this world," compares that text in the history of the Church to the painting whose eyes haunt the spectator, place himself where he will. There was never a century in which the official Church did not ignore it, never a century in which its words did not reassert their power. It might be said with some confidence that there is no crime, and no folly, which cannot be justly alleged against the official Christian Church. Avarice, greed of power, sensuality, persecuting cruelty, oppression, even disbelief in its own doctrine and cynical atheism, have disgraced the Church in several centuries, but the reform of the Church in each age has been wrought by confronting her with Christ, the living Christ Whom no treachery on the part of the Church has been able to destroy. To quote but a few instances :—In the fall of Rome it seemed as though heaven and earth were passing away, as though only one fact was clear, that heaven was wroth, and all the culture for which man had laboured, blotted out for ever—but the words of Christ lived on in the Confessions and Civitas Dei of S. Augustine. Again when heathendom on one side and Islam on the other had reduced the boundaries of Christendom almost to insignificance, the words of Christ lived on in the missionary labours of the saints of Ireland. Once more, when the infatuation of the Crusades and their failure had discredited the Church, and cast doubt on the power or will of Christ to help it, it was in the most

devout of all crusaders that the Christ-life shone out upon the world once more. It has been truly said (*Court of a Saint*, by W. Knox, p. 352): "Louis was one of those chosen souls who are the beacon lights of their generation, whose flame is the signal which wakens the distant fires of other centuries to life. Their lives are not only beautiful memories. They are living dominant forces in the spiritual world for all generations. In every age, apart from limitations of time or circumstance, they maintain the eternal standards of truth and justice, and appeal from the things of the flesh to the hidden things of the spirit." What S. Louis was, he was by the faith of the indwelling Christ, the Christ-life that triumphed even over the catastrophe of the Crusades.

What shall we more say? For time would fail to tell of "the Poor Men of Lyons, the Waldenses, the Beghards, the Friends of God, the Lollards, as well of Bernard of Clairvaux, of Francis of Assisi, of Gersen, of Wycliff, of John Huss, of Thomas à Kempis, and of Savanarola. The Mediæval Church had great sins to its charge, which it is idle to deny or excuse. But the cry of faithful souls was still the same. "Let us know the truth about the life of Christ. Let us follow it and imitate it. For therein lies the salvation of the world." And when at last, with the Reformation, every man began to hear in his own tongue the words of the Gospel, a new world came into being—a world still full of faults, and, above all, of disputations, but ardent in its desire to know the truth, and to give up all, yes, not infrequently even faith itself, for the sake of the truth, and believing that the truth alone shall make men free, a world that has set its hope in the future, and resents intolerantly any domination by the thought and teaching

of the past. This restless spirit of enquiry has questioned mercilessly the very Scriptures by which it was brought into life, has demanded imperatively to know the truth about Jesus, to sift the substratum of fact from the opinions and theories of His disciples, till it has left us a tattered New Testament, in which there is little of certainty, and still less of authority. Dare we still fall back on the prophecy: "Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away"? Dare we speak to well informed men and women of the authority of the living Christ?

We are not ashamed to do so for two reasons. The first is that in this revolt against unreality, against dominance of tradition is reflected, not indeed the whole but a very conspicuous part of the spirit of Christ. He was no friend of untruth in any of its forms. He preferred truth to peace. Can we not hear Him saying, "Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you 'Nay,' but rather division."—(S. Luke, xii. 51.) It is a craven or impatient spirit that is dismayed by the price that must be paid for coming to knowledge of the truth. But the conviction that truth, truth as a whole, distinct from fragmentary knowledge, can be reached, implies a belief that there is One in Whom all things consist. Really, though often unconsciously, it is an admission of the claim of Christ, "I am the Truth," for He is the Wisdom of the Father. Meanwhile the history of the last 200 years witnesses that all real advance towards truth, all progress towards more just relations between man and man, all respect for conscience, all sense of the worth of human personality, have been advanced by the force of appeal in Christ's name to the Christian conscience: "You call yourselves Chris-

tians. Why do you not act up to the principles of your Master?" A very remarkable instance is to be found in the *Life and Letters of Voltaire*, in spite of his genuinely professed hatred and contempt for Christ. Yet it was the same Voltaire who, twice over, at the utmost personal risk, undertook the defence of persecuted Protestants, and also built up an industry for his poorer neighbours. In reading this part of his life it is impossible to escape from the conviction that at that moment, and in spite of himself, it was Voltaire rather than the ecclesiastics of France in his day who more truly represented Christ: very difficult not to hear an echo of the voice that said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of one of these little ones ye did it unto Me."

A second reason for faith in the living Christ may be found in the annals of Missionary enterprise during the last two centuries. Wide asunder as were Jesuit and Moravian in doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline, they were alike in their desire to win the world for Christ, to present the living Christ to the heathen world, and to count not their lives dear unto death if they might be His witnesses to the remotest ends of the earth. In this work England for more than a century has had her share. Whole races and tribes have accepted Christ with the simplicity and directness of faith with which He was accepted in the first preaching of the Gospel. Churches have been founded, savages have been civilised, martyrs have borne their testimony as gladly as S. Stephen, S. James, or S. Paul. The living Christ has been stronger than all the hindrances put in His way by heathen or Mohammedan prejudice, or by the serious errors and divisions of His own Churches. It is true, of course, that missionary zeal is no monopoly of the

Christian faith, but the missionary zeal of Christians has this distinguishing mark, the missionary motive. No unprejudiced reader of the lives of such men as David Brainerd, Henry Martin, James Coleridge Patteson, James Paton, David Livingston, Thomas Valpy French, Sarah Tucker, Robert Laws, James Hannington, Robert Asshe, Mary Slessor, and a multitude of others, can fail to see that in all cases the missionary motive was the love of Christ, obedience to the call of "Him Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Has it ever been pretended that love of either Mahomet or Buddha has been the mainspring of the zeal of a single Mohammedan or Buddhist? These have been propagandists of a creed, but those, men consumed by personal devotion to Him Whose call sounded in their souls, as clearly as it fell on the ears of the fishermen of Gennesaret. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. They left all and followed Him." Islam and Buddhism have had their saints and mystics, their missionaries and martyrs. But it is in Christianity alone that we find the appeal of Personality to Personality, the power of constraining love to a living personal Lord.

Whatever account may be given of the matter, and this we must presently consider scrupulously, there can be no question that through the long centuries that separate us from the crucifixion of Jesus, His Cross and Resurrection, and faith in His return pervade the prayers, the hymns and the meditations of His followers, and have inspired with purity of heart and fervent zeal of obedience and self-renunciation an endless chain of Christians, of whom in very truth the world was not worthy.

CHAPTER VII

AUTHORITY AND PERSONALITY

"Truly this was the Son of God."

The impression made by the ethical teaching of the New Testament, not due to absolute originality—anticipations—nor to its apparent impracticability, but to the impression made by the personality of Jesus, a personality in which Divine and human met without confusion or absorption.—Personality: 1. Defined by Kant to lie in union of finite with absolute; not realised in early years. But in Boyhood of Jesus we find sense of Divine Fatherhood dominating human, a claim consistently maintained in the New Testament; 2. Claim of personality to potential universality realised in Jesus in spite of humiliation; 3. Sense of dependence on God as well as union with Him. How experienced in men: the experience of Jesus contrasted; 4. The dark background in human Personality, preventing complete self-mastery, surrounding and assailing Jesus, but never casting a shadow on His absolute self-mastery. Hence the authority with which Jesus dealt with the Law, giving us freedom, effecting what was never effected in the Old Testament, reconciliation with God.

WHILE there is no question of the profound impression that the ethical teaching of the New Testament has made on the world, it is by no means a simple task to analyse the elements that have contributed to make this impression. For instance, in a great ethical teacher it is natural to expect originality. In the case of Socrates that originality was displayed in his power of forcing men to think. His questions probed their preconceptions, their lazy acquiescence in forms of words and thoughts which they had never taken the trouble to understand. Stoic philosophy gave us humanity triumphant over circumstances, the worth of the individual as a reasonable being. Buddhism insisted on the

inevitable consequences of our actions: we must reap what we have sown. It is needless to multiply instances. We expect in every great ethical teacher some dominating note of His teaching, and in that note some marked originality.

But while the first efforts of criticim were directed to proving that Jesus was simply an ethical teacher, one of the greatest that the world has known, but not more than a sublime teacher of morality inspired by religious emotion, presently there arose another school which questioned His title to this position. It was argued that not a few of the most notable of His utterances had been anticipated: that, for instance, in the story of Ahikar belonging to the fifth century B.C. we read: "If thine enemy meet thee with evil, meet him with good"; and again in the Testament of Gad, vi. 3: "Love ye one another from the heart. If a man sin against thee speak to him peacefully, and in thy soul hold not guile and if he repent, forgive him." So, in Apocalyptic literature we come across anticipations of the Sermon on the Mount. In the story of Ahikar, "My son, go not after the beauty of a woman, and lust not after her in thy heart," and again in the *Secrets of Enoch*, lii., among beatitudes and curses we read, "Blessed is he who implants peace and love": and again, "Blessed is he who speaks with humble tongue and heart to all," and in xlix. "I swear to you, my children but I swear not by any oath, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other creature." In the Apocalypse of Baruch li. 15, li. 5, is an anticipation of one of the greatest of our Lord's sayings: "For what have men lost their life, and for what have those who were on earth exchanged their soul?", and of yet another in

the Testament of Dan. v. 3, "Love the Lord in all thy life, and one another with a true heart." Even of the parables, including that of the Prodigal Son, there are anticipations in the story of Ahikar.

It is possible, of course, to dismiss some of the foregoing as little better than verbal coincidences, but the cumulative weight of them cannot be so lightly dismissed. Still less is it possible to read the Apocrypha and the Apocalyptic books without coming to the conclusion of Dr. Charles (*Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, vol. ii., p. 293) that "by the early school of the *H*asidim or the pious ones of the Psalms, the best elements of the Old Testament had been taken up, studied, and developed, and the highly ethical code of conduct deduced therefrom had been carried out in actual life by these early Quietists." It would not be difficult to trace to Old Testament sources a large measure of what would commonly be described as the practical part of the teaching of Jesus Christ.

But what about the impracticable? What about the teaching that caused the disciples to exclaim, "Who then can be saved?" What about the teaching that ranks an angry thought or word with murder? a lustful desire in the very secrets of the heart with adultery? It is one thing to say, as the story of Ahikar, "Lust not after a woman in thy heart"—the righteousness of the injunction is at once recognised. But what of the sternness which condemns the desire as an act committed in that region of our nature, which is in the eyes of God of supreme importance? Need we go on to the commands "not to resist evil," "to turn the left cheek to him that smites the right," to dismiss anxiety about food and raiment, to refrain from criticism of our

neighbours? They are commands that would search us out, if we would allow ourselves to be searched out, but instead, we say frankly, "they are impossible in this world as it is constituted, and we must make them mean what Christ did not mean by them. Surely if we were heathen criticising Christianity we should fasten on these sayings, and ask whether the teacher of impossible ethics is a teacher of sound ethics. We should inquire whether the teacher Himself had obeyed His own precepts.

Now it is not difficult for those who are so minded to examine the records of Jesus with microscopic care, and to detect, if they will, flaws even in the flawless life. For nothing is easier than to find fault where the person criticised is absent and cannot answer for himself. But three things are certain: first that the disciples who lived with Him day by day found no fault in Him: secondly, that His enemies were unable to substantiate a single charge against Him: and thirdly, that the record which we possess is not marred, as we might have expected it to be marred, by mistaken praise or mistaken blame, by which ordinary recorders betray their own weakness in trying to appreciate the subject of their record. This last is a very remarkable feature, to which insufficient attention seems to have been paid. The Evangelists have not give us panegyrics, nor critiques, nor estimates of the character of Jesus. The reason will presently appear.

Whoever would understand the Gospels properly should first try to think out what is meant by personality. For there can be no question that the Gospels are impressions made by the personality of Jesus. Nor is the statement to be modified by referring to the

reflections of the writers, or to the object which they had in view when writing. The personality of Jesus undoubtedly made a deep impression on those who companied with Him. This impression they passed on to others. For the sake of argument we will not dispute whether these to whom the impression was passed on coloured it or not with their own reflections. The fact remains that the record of the four Gospels is the record of a personality unique in the world's history, a personality from which, as therein represented, a large portion of mankind, in many centuries, have derived the conception of One Who was very God and very Man—an impossible conception say some of our philosophers, but there it is, and multitudes far from ignorant or superstitious still hold fast to it.

But what is personality? At this point some kind of metaphysical discussion is unavoidable, and will be found profitable, it is hoped, by those who wish to put into shape the scattered impressions concerning our Lord, which they have gleaned from reading the New Testament, and from commentaries and sermons. How scattered these impressions are, will be found upon any honest attempt to consider what is meant by the union of the Divine and human natures in the Person of Jesus Christ. For surely there is no true union where it is suggested that some acts or words belong to the humanity, others to the Divinity of Jesus Christ. This is an alternative of rôles, not a union of natures. Nor is that a true union in which one of the two natures is absorbed by the other, whether the human by the Divine or the Divine by the human. No little patience is needed to reach the truth even approximately. Yet the truth is

worth reaching, even at the cost of a little reflection about ourselves as Persons.

Let us borrow an explanation of personality which is free from the suspicion of having been coined to suit theological purposes. Professor Wallace (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 273) gives this definition from Kant: "Human personality lies in the union of the contingent and finite elements of human life with the absolute and divine reason; and implies a power of the mind to detach itself from the given fact by an act of utter spontaneity." In other words, human life is finite and dependent on forces outside itself. It cannot find within itself the freedom and independence of which it is nevertheless conscious. That independence it reaches by union with the absolute and divine reason. "Let us make man in our image after our likeness."—(Gen. i. 26.) By reason of this union with the divine man is able "by an act of utter spontaneity," an exercise of the freedom which is his by his union with the divine reason, to detach himself from the circumstances and surroundings which appear to circumscribe his liberty. Human personality implies in other words a union of the finite with the absolute.

It is worth while to dwell a little longer on this explanation of personality. Our freedom as human beings is not reached by doing what we please. Caprice is not liberty but slavery to the passing whim or fancy. On the other hand, we are not mere slaves of heredity and environment, driven along by unseen forces. For while it is true, absolutely true, that every act of our own, every act of others that affects us, must leave its mark somewhere in our consciousness, to bear fruit, by what we call the inexorable laws of our nature, that is

not the whole of the story. Our kinship with God is a reality. So far as we act in accordance therewith we reach our true personality.

> Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

It must be added that this definition of Personality excludes from consideration those early years of life during which the sense of responsibility is dormant. Whatever may be the relation of the infant or child to the Divine reason, it is a matter on which we are not competent to pronounce judgment. Before there can be responsibility there must be a discernment between the " ego " and the " non-ego," the " I " and the " not-I." Again Tennyson may help us to this aspect of personality, " the isolation " of it :

> The baby new to earth and sky
> What time his tender palm is prest
> Against the circle of the breast
> Has never thought that " this is I."
>
> But as he grows he gathers much
> And learns the use of " I " and " me "
> And finds " I am not what I see
> And other than the things I touch."
>
> So rounds he to a separate mind
> From whence clear memory may begin,
> As through the frame that binds him in
> His isolation grows defined.

The " ego " is united with the Divine reason, but not merged in it. The separate personality stands out apart from all its surroundings, but is associated with the rest of humanity by that union with the Divine reason which is, or should be, common to all.

What light do these reflections throw upon the Per-

sonality of Jesus Christ? A hint, rather more than a hint, is give to us in the one fact recorded of our Lord's boyhood, His visit to the Temple at the age when, according to Jewish custom, He became a child of the Law, that is one whose responsibility had legal recognition, "a Person," as the Roman law would say. Up to that time, and indeed after it, He not only grew in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man, but He was also "subject to His parents." His life appeared to be dependent on the conditions and authority of His earthly home. Recognition of parental rule was His primary duty. Yet His remonstrance stands out, "How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be in My Father's house (or, on My Father's business)?"—(S. Luke, ii. 49.) It stands out, a note at once of independence and superiority, with an accompanying note of dependence. He speaks of "My Father" as specially His own—in some sense that Joseph and Mary could not claim. He says not "our Father," but "Mine." For all along it would seem this isolation from His earthly parents had been there, and they ought to have noticed it. "Wist ye not?" That duty to His own Father overruled what would otherwise have been His duty to them. Or to speak more truly, His duty to them could only be fulfilled in obedience to a higher call, for which His earthly existence had been undertaken. We find a personality which does not fit exactly into Kant's definition of human Personality. It is a Personality in which the Divine, the Absolute Person or "Logos" is united with a contingent and finite human life. The two elements are there, but in a wholly different relation, the one to the other.

It is needless, surely, to emphasise the insistence of

the New Testament on this claim of Our Lord to a Sonship quite other than that which is common to all men. Never in speaking of Himself and His disciples, or of Himself in common with other men, never does He say "Our Father." He teaches them to say "Our Father," but He joins not Himself in that "Our." With the exception of S. Mark, all the Evangelists record, and record repeatedly, His claim to a unique Sonship in this form. "Not every one that saith unto Me Lord, Lord . . . but he that doeth the will of My Father."—(S. Matt. vii. 21.) "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father."—(S. Matt. xi. 27.) "Every plant which My Heavenly Father planted not."—(S. Matt. xv. 13.) The King shall say . . . "Come ye blessed of My Father."—(S. Matt. xxv. 34.) "As My Father hath appointed unto Me."—(S. Luke, xxii. 29.) "Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you."—(S. Luke, xxiv. 49.) In S. John at least thirty times, culminating in the great words, "I and the Father are One."—(S. John, x. 30.) Contrast this utterance with the usage of S. Paul, or of any of the disciples in their writings. S. Paul never says, "My Father," but he often say "Our Father." When "My Father" is used in the Book of Revelation, the words are put into the mouth of our Lord. There is no sort of hesitation, no sort of variation in New Testament usage on this point. It is surely one which is not really met by those who would have us believe that Christ differs from us, only because He had a larger share of the Divine indwelling. Even the beloved disciple never dared to say "My Father," though he dwells often on the sonship of God's children. "Beloved now are we children of God . . . we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is."—(1 John,

iii. 2, 3.) But for all that he leaves "My Father" to his Lord.

There are words of Professor Wallace, which seem most apposite here, although he would not have used them in this connection. They are the more striking for that very reason. He says (p. 288): "A person is on the one hand an individual, or individualised being, one among many, in ordinary cases a single living human body, which, on the other hand, has a capacity of regarding itself as a universal, not bound by limits of actual achievement, but as infinite and free. This is the so-called mystery, grandeur, or contradiction of personality. In the little physical individual which is alive—in the single subject or living soul, which is a mere point excluding all others and excluded by them, there is a potential universality, a claim to absolute unconstrained existence, to complete independence of action, utter spontaneity. Unchecked this may degenerate into disease; the individual may see himself, in his petty individuality, as all-embracing and deserving universal empire."

The truth of this conception of personality may be tested in several ways. For instance, that which in youth is regarded indulgently as "building castles in the air" lives on in many persons (shall we say in most of us?) in the shape of "what might have been." The accountant, opening his secret heart, will disclose the belief that he might have been a poet—but for a mistaken early education. The world is full of "mute, inglorious Miltons," of heroes who never had their opportunity, of undiscovered inventors, of unrecognised philosophers. "In the little physical individual . . .

there is a potential universality." On the other hand, we may say with Wordsworth :

> "Not in entire forgetfulness
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God Who is our Home"

In "the little physical individual" there are longings and aspirations not satisfied by the best that the world has to give, nor even by all that it has to give, memories or hopes (call them which you will) of kinship with a world invisible, conceptions of life as a pilgrimage in a strange land, and of "greeting from afar" the promises and glories of the true home of the soul. "In the little physical individual there is a potential universality."

But when we turn to the Personality of Jesus Christ in the New Testament we are conscious, however we account for it, that this universality is not potential but actual: restrained certainly, but actual. The little physical individual is there—the man of sorrows, the maniac, as some deemed Him, the carpenter's son, as others called Him, but even with the crown of thorns and wearing the purple robe recognised by the dull, unemotional Pilate as one of whom he must needs stand in awe, recognised on the cross by the hardened centurion as the Son of God. "The little physical individual" could not, in His "petty individuality" have sunk lower, yet His claim to be "all embracing and deserving universal Empire," was no symptom of "diseased degeneracy," but a fact before which His bitterest enemies in their secret hearts trembled, "Let be, let us see whether Elijah cometh."—(S. Mark, xv. 36.) To the very last their hearts misgave them. What irrational fear, if He was only an ethical teacher: how natural, if He had indeed healed the sick, cast out

devils, calmed the storm, and raised the dead. The consistency of the portrait, as drawn by different hands, is a miracle of psychological delineation by men ignorant of psychology, unless, indeed, they drew from the life. But if they drew, as we hold, from the life, then we are confronted with no ordinary Personality. What is before us is not the "union of the finite element of individual life with the Divine reason," but in fact the union of the Divine Reason Himself with the finite element of human life. No wonder is it that Pilate trembled.

Two more passages from the same essay are worth quoting in connexion with the Personality of Jesus Christ.

On page 276 Professor Wallace writes: "Religion, like everything else in humanity, only exists in what we may call a radical antithesis, a synthesis of two aspects neither of which can be severed from the other. It is, on the one hand, a sense of dependence on the Divine, of the infinite littleness of human nature; and on the other a sense that God is with man, and even now in this world God and man are reconciled into one."

In no human personality of which we have record has religion been so strong an element as in the Personality of Jesus Christ. His days were spent in doing His Father's will: His nights were spent in prayer: His meals were sacraments: His works of mercy acted parables. The birds of the air, the flowers of the field, the games of children, the labour of husbandmen, the devotion of shepherds to their flocks, even the injustice of judges, the dishonesty of stewards and the recklessness of prodigals were all turned by the Divine alchemy of His mind into the pure gold of heavenly significance.

But where do we find in any of His recorded words, that which is the groundwork of all human piety, the sense of infinite littleness in the presence of God? On the contrary, He shocks the Jews by His bold assertion, "I and the Father are One"—not "one" in the sense that some "atonement" some "reconciliation" has been effected between the Father and Himself, but as the Jews plainly recognised in the sense of making Himself equal with God. Or if the testimony of the fourth Gospel is excluded, let us take words from S. Matthew's Gospel and try to fit them into the mouth of S. Paul, S. John, S. Francis of Assisi, S. Catherine of Siena, Lancelot Andrews, Richard Baxter, or John Wesley. The words are these, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: Yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father, and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father, neither doth any know the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."—(S. Matt. xi. 25–28.) From what lips of man, filled as you will of the Divine Spirit, yet not himself Divine as well as human—could we bear to hear this approving intimacy with the ways of God, "Yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight?", this exclusive claim to Divine commission: "All things have been delivered to Me of My Father," this exclusive knowledge of God, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son?", and this exclusive right of communicating Divine revelation, "he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him."

Yet does the utterer of these words claim to be "meek and lowly in heart"—aye, and in virtue of their recognising both these claims—His claim of Divine equality and His claim of lowliness of heart—myriads in long centuries, myriads of the weary and heavy-laden have taken Him at His word, and coming to this wondrous Personality, have found rest for their souls.

Yet one last quotation from Professor Wallace's essay. It will be found on page 275: "As Fichte has hinted, and as Lotze has enforced at some length, the finite being finds himself on all hands confronted by forces with which he did not invest himself, and by laws which he has to accept, as well as by wills different from his own: nay, even in the recesses of his own being he seems to meet with a dark, strange substance which is in him but is not he: and to which, as a vehicle, his personal development is attached. We have grown up, as it were, by piecemeal, and are never wholly ourselves: we identify ourselves with the particular point of view at which we started at a particular stage of our development. The complete sanity of self-control, of self-mastery, and absolute possession of our own souls, is what we never fully attain."

By "the strange, dark substance which is in us but not ourselves," Lotze intended that side of our nature which is conditioned by our animal nature—not necessarily in a bad sense, but the subject of transient ideas or feelings, moods and impulses, which come and go, changing with passage of time and circumstances, and having in them no element of permanence. They "are in us but not ourselves." Among these, however, must be numbered the evil passions, the cravings for sensual indulgence, against which the saints of God in

all ages have had to carry on a laborious, and not always successful warfare. "It is no more I," cries S. Paul, "that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me."—(Rom. vii. 20), so that "the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary the one to the other."—(Gal. v. 17.) The New Testament presents our Lord to us in a true human body accessible to fleshly cravings of hunger, thirst, sleep, and repugnance to pain. It presents Him to us as "offering prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death."—(Hebr. v. 7.) We are told that the Tempter sought to reach Him through hunger, through desire of self-advertisement, through lust of power, through His affection for His Mother, through remonstrances of His disciples, through the offer of Academic reputation. The New Testament insists on the reality of His humanity. But nowhere does it represent that humanity as a "dark, strange substance" interfering with "the complete sanity of His self-control, of His self-mastery, and absolute possession and appropriation of all His soul." That with us He shared the battle of spirit against flesh, so as to "be touched with a sense of our infirmities," is evident. But no cloud of defeat in that battle cast its dark shadow on His soul, no treachery of the will consenting with the carnal against the spiritual weakened the sanity of His self-control, His self-mastery. No agony of bitter remorse, no humiliating confession, no cry for pardon passed His lips. The Word was made flesh. But the Word was God and remained God. Once more the Personality of Christ stands out in marked contrast with human personality. Once more we have found union of the Divine with the human, not a thwarted

aspiration which, if it were realised, would mean the absorption of the finite in the Infinite, but an experience revealing itself by signs unmistakable, the experience not of a sublime elevation transcending all human imagination, but of a humiliation, a self-limitation inspired by the yearning of Divine love to save a lost world.

It is the presence of this Personality that redeems the attitude of our Lord to the Law from the charge of blasphemy that was brought against Him. For the comparison of certain prophetic utterances regarding the law with those of Jesus Christ does not hold good. Jesus, in His humanity, belonged to His own age, an age in which the Old Testament Canon had been formed, an age in which the Law was held in greater veneration than the rest of the Old Testament. Nor did He consider it His mission to destroy or even to weaken that veneration. "Think not that I came to destroy the Law, . . . I came not to destroy but to fulfil."—(S. Matt. v. 17.) The Law was the shield with which He quenched the fiery darts of the Tempter. To the Law He referred the Jews for evidence which substantiated His claims. To fulfil the Scriptures He made His entry into Jerusalem as the prophets had foretold, to fulfil the Scriptures He went on to meet His doom, to fulfil the Scriptures He cried, "I thirst," from the Scriptures He taught the two disciples that the Christ must suffer. He drew no "higher critical" distinction between the Law and the Prophets. To Him both were equally inspired, both alike the written Word of God. When, therefore, on His own authority, He read new meaning into the words of Scripture, or even set aside conceptions that the Law contained, making it more

stringent than before, He did so, not arguing as ethical teacher, nor voicing a Divine communication as Prophet, but as Lawgiver, and for the Jew there was no Lawgiver but God. By that authority He restored the primitive simplicity and sanctity of the marriage bond, the true humanity of the Sabbath rest, the original equality of all the animal creation, all equally clean and good as the Creator made and approved them. He shrank not from this exercise of authority, though it revolutionised the position of the Mosaic Law, and ultimately the whole relation of the Jew and Gentile. For by His enactment the Mosaic Law ceased to be the means of fulfilling the righteousness of God, the code to which all humanity must be subject. It took its true place as the instrument by which Israel was fitted to prepare the world for Christ, "the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."

Inheritors of the liberty wherewith Christ set us free, we do not always remember that it was Divine authority, and nothing less, that procured our freedom. It may be said that we have never yet given the Mosaic Law its true place in the Divine economy. We have forgotten that in the old world sunk deep in the slough of sensuality, the fruit of polytheism, there was one spot and one only of firm ground, the monotheistic faith of Israel. That faith pervaded every detail of life with a sense of religious duty, for which authority was to be found in the Mosaic Law. It was a heavy yoke, "which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear," says S. James (Acts xv. 10), but a yoke in which, as the cxix Psalm testifies, pious souls found a delight. Asceticism has its joys, and these not all ignoble. Through it the mystic has often been strengthened for communion with God and found deliverance from soul-destroying compromises. The

mere overthrow of Mosaism by ridicule or scepticism would have been the deathblow of religion and morality. To have Hellenised it would have made it not a religion but a philosophy. It is easier to destroy an ascetic religion than to replace it. The wreck of Puritanism in England opened the way for the moral decline which set in with the Restoration.

It was not the genius of S. Paul, nor the mysticism of S. John, but the Divine Personality of Jesus that supplied to the Old Testament at once its true authority and its true interpretation, and revealed behind the economy for the instruction of Israel, the Person, the Will, the Working of Jehovah, the God of all mankind, "Who hath made of one every nation of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."—(Acts xvii. 26.) Not by commentaries, nor even by textual quotations here and there was the work done. We shall have occasion presently to consider direct references to the Old Testament. The Life was the Light of men. Man saw what God intended man to be, when He made man in the image of God. Men were conscious that the true Shechinah was neither on Zion nor on Gerizim, no, nor even on the Mount of Transfiguration as a permanent abode, but where Jesus was, whether on the lake-side or in the Pharisee's house, or even on the Cross itself. He that had power on earth to forgive sins had authority also "to make all meats clean," to fix the seat of sin within man, whether Jew or Gentile, and not without, power not only to diagnose but to deliver. There remained only that great need to which the sacrifices of Jew and Gentile alike testified, he need of reconciliation with God. That need the Personality of Jesus satisfied, and thereby won for Him authority over the

hearts of men, which no words, no other deeds could have won. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "He died for me." In those simple words devout souls have been fain to express the breaking down of the barriers which separated them from God. But it was the Personality of the God-man that made His death to be a satisfaction for sin on which their souls could safely rest.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AUTHORITY OF THE SON OF MAN

Authority of the Son of Man: Messianic as in Daniel.—Aramaic equivalent of Man: Various uses of name by our Lord.—Used by Him in preference to Son of David: His Humanity more to Him than His Royalty: True Personality lies in richness and variety of interests.—This variety and richness illustrated by our Lord's use of Son of Man.—Illustrations from Chasidist literature: Messiah will increase knowledge of God bring in the new Sabbath, reveal forgiveness of sin, teach us prayer in the Spirit, complete unfinished work of God.—Messiah the true man the judge of mankind.—Illustration from Dr. Mozley's sermon on "Unspoken Judgments." The suffering Messiah.—Problem of world suffering.—Not solved by death of Christ except as atonement for sin.—Sacrifice suggests solidarity of universe with man in suffering.—Illustration of this from Chasidists.—If such thoughts not foreign to Judaism, why import them from mysteries, etc.—*Objections*: 1. Why have different gospels different parts of this richness of interest?—Because each evangelist selected what he understood best. Ideas useless if not incarnated in a Personality; 2. Will not Omniscience account more simply? *Ans.*—If our Lord's prayers were real prayers, why not His meditations also?—The authority of the Son of Man derived from His absolutely unique Personality.—Illustration from J. K. Mozley.—The cross the supreme manifestation of judgment unto salvation.—Faith not assent to statements, but surrender to a Person.

It might be supposed that in considering the Divine element in the Personality of Jesus Christ, we had exhausted all that was to be said as to His authority. For what authority could be greater than the Divine? What need has the Divine of supplementary authority? That the Divine could be so united with the human as to constitute one Person, or preferably one Being, no doubt, needs substantiation, and it appeared that this union is asserted in the New Testament conception of Christ. And at that stage the inquiry is too often left with serious loss of the full understanding of the marvel

of the great mystery of the Incarnation. We are content to think of Christ as Son of God incarnate and pass by, almost unnoticed, the title that He Himself used—the Son of Man.

There is the strongest reason for holding that the title was used by our Lord as a Messianic title. It is not conceivable that He should have been ignorant of its Messianic use in Daniel vii. 13, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and He came even to the ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." When these words are set beside the sayings recorded in the three Synoptic Gospels, "Henceforth shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power," to which two of the three add, "and coming in the clouds of heaven"—we have a parallelism, which, if no dogmatic interest were involved, would be deemed absolutely conclusive. Criticism which questions the force of such a parallelism is untrue to its own principles. It makes no difference that the words Son of Man are capable of another rendering. What we wish to ascertain is what our Lord meant by them, and we have the answer in His own words. Matters are not mended when the force of this conclusion is evaded by the suggestion that our Lord did not use them, but that they were put into His mouth by His disciples. If documentary evidence has any value at all, there is no evidence for the suggestion, and the fullest evidence on the other side. For the disciples never use this title when they are referring to their Master. It always comes to us from His own lips. It was a title from which, so far as the evidence goes, they shrank. To suppose

that the Synoptists conspired with S. John to put into the lips of Jesus a title which He never used is to discredit criticism.

But although our Lord used the title as a Messianic title, it does not follow that this use exhausted for Him its meaning. The probability is that He spoke in Aramaic, and in Aramaic "the force of the 'son' has been so weakened by time as virtually to have disappeared, so that it means nothing more nor less than man."—(Driver, *Hastings Dict. of the Bible*, IV., p. 580, § 8.) We have to ask ourselves why, and in what sense, our Lord thought of the Messiah as essentially man. A reference to His use of the title shows that He so applied it when thinking of Himself as (1) the pre-existent Messiah "that descended out of heaven, which is in heaven."—(S. John iii. 13.); (2) as the suffering Messiah, the Son of Man shall be delivered in the hands of men (S. Matt. xvii. 22) the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head (S. Matt. viii. 20); (3) as the Messiah who has authority to forgive sin (S. Matt. ix. 6), and Who is Lord of the Sabbath (S. Matt. xii. 8); (4) as servant of men "not coming to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many" (S. Matt. xx. 28), and as come "to seek and to save that which was lost" (S. Luke xix. 10); (5) as the crucified "as Moses lifted up the serpent un the wilderness even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (S. John iii. 14); (6) the eating of Whose Flesh imparts eternal life (S. John vi. 52–54); (7) the King of Glory before Whom the world will stand for judgment (S. Matt. xxv. 31), "Who will send forth His angels to sever the good from the evil" (S. Matt. xiii. 41), Who will confess before His Father those who have confessed Him before men (S. Luke xii. 8).

This is not an exhaustive account of the uses of the title, but it is sufficient for our purpose, which is to show that, while the Messianic sense is clear, there is an equally clear reference to His Humanity as such, His Humanity as united with His Divinity. We cannot fail to contrast it with the title Son of David, used by Bartimæus, by the Canaanite woman, and twice at least by the multitude. Of Himself Jesus used it once, indirectly, in His dispute with the Pharisees and by way of raising a problem which His adversaries failed to solve. He avoided the royal title and chose the human. By calling Himself Son of Man, He not only passed beyond the narrow bounds of the most exclusive of all races, and enlarged for mankind that ministry which his miracles and discourses seemed to confine to the house of Israel and seed of Abraham, but He also made the whole human race partakers in some sense of His sufferings, His ministry, His judgment and His glory. Here it would seem that as modern philosophical speculation justified and confirmed the portrait of our Lord's Divine personality drawn from life by those who were themselves no philosophers, so we shall again in modern philosophic teaching find a like confirmation in respect of His humanity. As Professor Wallace gave unintended support to the distinctness of Christ's personality from that of ordinary men, so we will summon Professor Bosanquet to witness to the portrait of the Son of Man—not, let us repeat once more, because Jesus or His disciples use it as philosophers, but because the portrait, being true to life, philosophic truth will confirm its reality. Our reference will be to a passage in Professor Pringle Pattison's *Idea of God*, pp. 262, 263. Professor Pringle Pattison is there criticising Professor

Bosanquet's teaching on the Absolute and the Finite. Professor Bosanquet, he tells us, is arguing against the tendency to over-emphasise the exclusiveness of the self, and " has no difficulty in showing that the value of a self depends just on the extent to which it appreciates a common heritage of ideas and interests. The life of the individual, as it builds up its true self is thus a continual process of self-transcendence : its true personality or individuality does not lie in its unshareable feelings but in the richness and variety of its thoughts and interests."

Let us apply these words to the personality of Jesus. Having regard to His earthly parentage, His race, His industrial occupation He should by all rights have been dominated by fixed ideas and a few unshareable interests, through which His sense of a Divine call struggling might at times uplift Him, but at times only, leaving Him otherwise local and circumscribed in His outlook. Judging by human standards we might have expected Him to be a second Amos preoccupied with a sense of the Divine judgment overhanging the court of Herod and the Priesthood of Jerusalem. But while our Lord scourges the sins of His contemporaries, He does so in language and with an outlook that finds its way directly to the hearts of men of all time. Nor is it in reference to such denunciations that He calls Himself the Son of Man. These are matters that principally affect His own age, " unshareable feelings," we might almost call them. It should be noted also that it is not in reference to His miracles that He calls Himself the Son of Man. These were signs to those who beheld them, acted parables to us if we read them aright. But they separate Him from humanity, except that they show

sympathy with its sufferings. They are credentials addressed to a particular age, and a particular conception of Divine self-manifestation.

He who would understand aright the Humanity of Jesus Christ must turn from the modern tendency to understand it by dramatising it, that is, by reproducing the Palestinian Jew, and erecting Him into Friend, Hero, Teacher, Master, with all the limitations of His age and surroundings. There is more truth than some would have us believe in holding that he who would know the manhood of Christ, must study Him as Man, as Son of Man, rather than as *a* man. For it was not only in sharing our external conditions that He realised His Manhood. It was rather in transcending them, and in raising Manhood to its most godlike capacities, as He testified by His use of the title "Son of Man."

It might be said that by so treating His Manhood, we are making it unreal. We are not doing so. We do not assert that in virtue of His Divinity He, so to speak, flooded His human reason with ideas foreign altogether to His race and age. If we did, Dr. Rashdall would charge us with falling into the heresy of Apollinaris. But we do assert that by reason of the union of the Divine with the human, though He came to establish the Messianic Kingdom, He avoided the snare of restoring the Davidic Kingdom, and that, using all that was highest and best in current Jewish thought, the thought of those "who waited for the consolation of Israel," He poured into the conception of the Messiah ideas which were, in fact, a transvaluation of human nature, lifting it from its fallen estate into partnership with God Himself.

But where shall we find these Messianic ideas to which

we refer? By the kindness of the Rev. Paul Levertoft the writer has been permitted to use notes of a lecture based on Mr. Levertoft's learned work on the Chasidim. It would appear that close study reveals a tradition of mystic meditation for a long time oral, which goes back to the beginning of the Christian era. "Mystic and Eschatological traditions were transmitted orally as an esoteric doctrine. Even the sea of the Talmud has its gulf streams of mysticism . . . the spiritual teaching of the prophets and, above all, the Messianic hope have always kept up a spiritual alertness, notwithstanding the legalistic basis of Judaism, at least in some Jews, in all ages and in all countries. The reading of the Law and the Prophets in Synagogic worship and the liturgical use of the Psalms have preserved institutional Judaism from mere formalism on the one hand, and, on the other, from a type of mysticism which is individualistic and anti-social. The strong sense of Divine Transcendence has preserved the balance against the danger of Pantheism." Mr. Levertoft enumerates from Talmudic literature five groups of devout mystics of whom some at least were contemporary with our Lord, among whom we find the "secret ones" entrusted with esoteric wisdom—one of their rules being not to let the left hand know what the right hand does. They had a Chamber in the Temple where they deposited their gifts secretly.

We shall not indeed attempt to assert, much less to prove that all our Lord's sayings concerning the Son of Man were derived from the teaching of His contemporaries. It is enough to show that they were not alien to the most devout thought of Judaism. It is probable enough that sometimes He anticipated it: sometimes He may have made use of it. But the study of the

parallelism will be useful as well as interesting. It will help us to an understanding of some of our Lord's sayings and will also reveal a *nidus*, a centre of thought and feeling, which make it easier to understand how manifold and many-sided was our Lord's actual discourse, and that the Evangelists were not inventors but reporters of His teaching. It is not claiming too much, surely, for the teaching of Jesus that it was on the level of the most devout of Judaism. The following extract from Mr. Levertoft's lecture are strongly suggestive of our Lord's sayings concerning the Son of Man.

(1) We read "that in the days of the Messiah there will be a greater revelation of God: that the knowledge of God will be as it was before the Fall: that the days of Messiah will bring the restoration of all things, the ascending of all things through the Messiah, the ideal Adam." We are reminded of the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, difficult to understand without this key: "If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things? and no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of Heaven even the Son of Man which is in heaven."—(S. John iii. 12, 13.) Again, when our Lord challenges the faith of His disciples, as the multitude begin to desert Him: "Doth this cause you to stumble? What then if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before?"—(S. John vi. 61, 62.) It is evident that the allusion is in both cases to the unfitness of the hearers to receive that fuller knowledge of God which belongs to the Messianic times, and to share in the ascending of all things through the Messiah into heaven.

(2) We read that "At the Advent of the Messiah the aim of the Divine Architect will be reached for the

building of His Kingdom will be finished. But the perfect Sabbath of God will begin when He enters into His Kingdom in order to rule." A light is thrown on the words, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."—(S. Mark ii. 28.) It means far more than that the Son of Man has a right to dispense with Sabbath laws. It leads our thoughts to the "Sabbath keeping which remains for the children of God," of which the earthly Sabbath is the type. Our Lord would surely have been very far from the teaching that the day of rest is a day of pleasure opened by attendance at an early eucharist. The hallowing of the day meant something very different for Him.

(3) Again, "The sin-forgiving love of God comes from the Will of all Wills, that is, from the innermost heart of God, which is above His Will as revealed in the Torah. This Will of all Wills shall be perfectly revealed in the times of the Messiah." So Christ said, "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins."—(S. Mark ii. 10.) In this connection we cannot refrain from quoting another passage which is strongly reminiscent of the fifteenth of S. Luke: "When we hear a bird talk we are filled with wonder and delight at the extraordinary phenomenon. So the Angels in Heaven are filled with delight over a sinner that repenteth, for his spirit is changed and he begins to learn the speech of Angels. Even in heaven perfect joy will only come in the days of Messiah when the heathen, too, will turn to the only true God, and Satan will be conquered." So Christ said, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."—(S. Luke xix. 10.)

(4) Another striking illustration may be added, though the words Son of Man are not used. We read,

"If only Israel would pray in the Spirit, the Messiah would reveal Himself in all His glory through her," and our thoughts turn to the words, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."—(S. John iv. 23, 24.) To which the Samaritan woman replied, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ. When He is come, He will declare unto us all things." Jesus saith unto her, "I that speak unto thee am He."

We must repeat that these passages are not quoted as proofs that the thoughts contained in them were actually current in our Lord's day. But they are evidence that to the devout Israelite such thoughts were not strange.

The point then that we have reached is this. Jesus, knowing Himself to be Messiah, chose not the Messianic ideal which was exclusively Judaistic, that of the world-sovereign seated on the throne of David, but the ideal which made for the restoration of humanity to God. His choice responds to Professor Bosanquet's test, "the reality of a self depends just on the extent to which it appropriates a common heritage of ideas and interests."

But the half is not yet told. In the passages already quoted we have seen, if we have eyes to see, the creation and redemption of man as part of the eternal purpose of God. For the Son of Man is none other than the only begotten Son of God, "Whom He gave that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."—(S. John iii. 16.) The Son of Man is He Who, coming into the world, said "Lo! I am come to do Thy will."—(Hebr. x. 9.) He is, in fact, the Lamb

that hath been slain from the foundation of the world." —(Rev. xiii. 8.) The love that places humanity on the throne of God is more wonderful surely than even the love of Incarnation.

The Chasidim tell us also that "Man has been created by God in order that he may finish what God has deliberately left unfinished. Not that the Almighty and perfect God needs the help of His creatures, but it is His love which causes Him to impart His own nature to the work of His hands, in order that man should have the privilege and joy of becoming His fellow-worker in this world in natural, as well as in spiritual, life."

Lest, looking at man in his actual state, such love should seem to be a pure mirage, we have further seen that it is the lost, the outcast whom that love specially seeks, so that a new value is set on man for his pure manhood's sake. The whole of the ancient order, based on the exploitation of the masses for the benefit of the few, becomes a direct reversal of the will of God. With Him no human soul is insignificant, none worthless, none beyond the reach of forgiveness. It is over the lost that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God.

We have seen also that the worship which God seeks is not in multitude and pomp of ceremonies, but in the spirit of the worshipped.

We have seen Sabbath rest transformed by a new association, that is, with the rest which is a rest from warfare, though still a changing from glory into glory. Referring to the final rest the Chasidim say: "Even this relatively final rest must be considered in a progressive sense; for we shall go on from strength to strength, from Paradise to Paradise."

But to these Messianic ideals must be added the

thought of the moral government of the Universe, depicted in the familiar language of the coming of the Son of Man in His glory, the severing of the just and unjust, the condemnation of the one and glorification of the other. All this is emphatically and repeatedly stated to be the work of the Son of Man. We shall be made manifest, know ourselves, and many human judgments will be reversed before a tribunal at once Divine and human, a tribunal which is already at work, for, does not all post-Christian history reveal Christ to be indeed the human conscience focussed in one Being? Christ is already the conscience of the world and therefore its Judge. This thought of the judgment of Christ as the yet unspoken judgment of mankind is nobly expressed in Dr. Mozley's sermon on the subject. The relation between human conscience at its highest and the final judgment by the Son of Man is incisively summed up by him, as follows: "'Know ye not,' says the Apostle, 'that the saints shall judge the world?' We shall, doubtless, one day know the meaning of these words much better than we do now; when God, Who acts by human means and by the agency of those hearts and wills which He has moulded into harmony with His own, will bring about the great final division of mankind by means, in part, of that judgment in men's hearts which He Himself has formed, and which will at the proper time attain a full disclosure and manifestation."—(Mozley's *University Sermons*, p. 231.) The sermon concludes with a noble passage which enforces the same point. "Fear this judgment, for if it is against you, you are indeed in sad case. This mute judgment is on all sides of you, it surrounds you; you do not hear it or see it, but there it is. Within the conscience of

man is the tribunal that condemns you. You may be carried aloft on the conventional judgment of the world, absolving you on its own rules . . . but in the inner heart of man there still sits the mute judge who discerns and speaks not. In a thousand breasts, into which thou canst not penetrate, but which are all around thee, the judge sits; he sees what thou wouldst fain obscure; he understand, he knows thee, he sees thee; even if thine hypocrisy hide thee from thyself, thou art naked in his sight. Depend not on technical acquittals then; though thou art ever so safe in the world's judgment, thou hast a judge who is still formidable—formidable as a prophet, though he holds as yet no court as yet upon earth. Fear this hidden adversary; and if it be not too late, deal with him quickly while thou art in the way with him.—(Mozley's *University Sermons*, pp. 232–233.)

We have not, however, unfolded the contents of the title, "Son of Man," until we have studied it in relation to suffering and specially the suffering of the Cross. "The Son of Man must be betrayed into the hands of sinful men." "The Son of Man must be lifted up." No thought was more perplexing to the Jews than that of the suffering Christ. "Who is this Son of Man?"—(S. John xii. 34.)—they asked when He spoke of being lifted up.

The question was natural, we might say unanswerable, so long as suffering was regarded as a token of Divine displeasure. It was conceivable that God should permit the Christ to endure many pains and indiginities on the understanding that these were followed by a great deliverance, and a tenfold retribution poured out on the heads of His persecutors, so that the righteous might

wash His feet in the blood of the wicked and "men might say that there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."—(Ps. lviii. 11.) But a crucifixion—with the curse attached thereto! The bitter confession, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Could these have more than one interpretation, and that the absolute condemnation of the Sufferer?

So the great problem of the world's suffering remained unsolved—yes—and it remains unsolved, so long as Jesus is for us the type of a patient sufferer, Who suffers for no particular reason, Whose sufferings work out no practical purpose. It is useless to dilate on His Patience, His Forgiveness of those who nailed Him to the Cross, and kindred matters, if He could have put an end to the whole tragedy by simply repelling the charge of blasphemy. He undoubtedly claimed the Messianic title. He claimed to be the Son of God, as other men are not. For these claims He was put to death, and justly put to death, unless He substantiated them. For those who believe that He did so, His death has a meaning. For those who do not, the death of the best man who has trodden earth is a hideous blunder, for which He was as much responsible as those who slew Him. To say that He (see the Rev. H. D. A. Major's paper in the *Modern Churchman*, September, 1921, p. 275) "believed that he must suffer and die to achieve the redemption of mankind from the forces opposed to the kingdom of God" is but to assert his lack of mental balance. His life might have done something to achieve it. His death could do nothing but strengthen those forces by confirming the justice of His condemnation.

There is no question that Jesus identified Himself

with the suffering servant of Jehovah. But is it possible to trace the connection between the Messiah and this sufferer? If we can do so, if we can connect the idea of sacrifice with the office of the Messiah it must be through some deeper solution of the mystery of evil than any that the Old Testament presents. The Old Testament connects evil with the fall of man, but presents no remedy for evil except repentance and sacrifice. But evil is deeper and more widespread than sin. It affects the whole creation. Why should creation suffer for the sin of man? The Old Testament does not answer this question. Yet it deeply perplexed the most pious minds in Israel. An interesting attempt at solution is presented in certain extracts from Chasidist literature which seem worth quotation, as bearing on the sufferings of the Son of Man. In one passage—obviously of later date—we read: "We long for the restoration of the sacrificial system in Israel in the days of Messiah, for the Divine spark is imprisoned in animals and in all creation." We have travelled here very far from the primitive ideas of feasting or even placating God. Sacrifice is here presented as belonging to the solidarity of all creation in virtue of the Divine indwelling. The same idea is presented, but more fully worked out in the following very remarkable passage: "The essence of sin consists in man's self-sufficiency before God. Man is endowed by God with a measure of the Divine creative power, which shows both the love of God, and also man's Divine origin; but, without recognition of man's dependence on His maker, and in self-chosen isolation from Him, man soon becomes a worshipper of himself. The whole creation groans because of this perversion of Man; for he comes to think not only of

himself, but also of the Universe, as something which it is possible to separate from God the Creator of all. Everything is longing for the Messianic redemption, through which God's Immanence will be fully realised. "The lower water weeps. I want to be with the King." (The lower water is here practically equivalent to the world.)

It is impossible surely to read this passage without being reminded that the intense and most real of all the sufferings of the Son of Man was the sense of "His separation from God the Father of all." May we not believe that Jesus in prayer and meditation had pondered on this greatest of all problems to the devout—the presence of evil in the Universe. His very perception of the love of God, and care of God for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field would intensify His grief over scenes of misery that daily confronted Him. May He not well have reached some such conclusion as that of the Chasidist, and so have connected the world's misery with man's separation from God, and, going yet further, have taken on Himself all the burden of that separation, making it His own and atoning for it by the sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross? In such a death there would be a real meaning—a renunciation of man's self-sufficiency before God, a renunciation of self-chosen isolation from Him, a real acceptance of the consequences of that isolation in their most awful form—the being, or seeming to be, forsaken by God—all endured to bring about "the Messianic redemption through which God's Immanence will be fully realised."

It will be said, no doubt, that in the recorded words of Jesus there is no trace of such ideas. But is there no consciousness of the solidarity of man with Nature in

the Sermon on the Mount, or in the words, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without My Father?"—(S. Matt. x. 29.) Is there no foreshadowing of life out of death in His saying? "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."—(S. John xii. 24.) No thought of Immanence in the prayer? "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one."—(S. John xvii. 23.) Surely it is absurd to confine the thought of Jesus to the words—very few indeed—which for critical reasons we assign to the lips of Jesus. It is mockery to extol His greatness as a moral teacher, but to attribute His greatest moral and religious sayings to the genius of S. John. It has been felt necessary, at some length, and at risk, it may be feared, of exhausting patience in some quarters, to insist that there was a heritage in Israel of very deep and devout mysticism, from which it would be unreasonable to shut out the Son of Man. If He was, as all admit, constantly in His Father's presence, continually instant in prayer and meditation, keenly sensitive to the presence of pain, disease and sin, is there any conceivable reason why His thoughts should not have reached greater heights, probed greater depths than were reached by mystics of His own or even of later days?

Objections to the foregoing paragraphs are likely to arise from two opposite quarters. The critical school will ask, "How comes it to pass—if the whole Christ of the New Testament was present to the consciousness of Jesus—that different sides of that consciousness are confined, some to the Synoptics, some to S. John, some to S. Paul, some to the writer of the Epistle to the

Hebrews? Why did not fragments of Johannine sayings [1] find their way into the Synoptic gospels, and conversely, the story of the Virgin Birth into S. John's Gospel? The question would be more easily answered if we knew more of the circumstances in which, and the purposes for which, the different gospels were composed. We might then know how it came to pass that the Parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son are not to be found in the pages of S. Matthew, or why S. Mark alone records the parable of the seed growing secretly. While these simple questions can only be answered by guess work, it is not surprising that the more difficult are unsolved also. But He Who taught us "not to cast pearls before swine" may very fitly have used discrimination in the matter of His discourses, as He spoke to different audiences.

It is equally possible and even probable that the good seed of the Sower did not find equal lodgment in the hearts of all His disciples. Peter and Matthew may well have found unintelligible, discourses treasured in the heart of the disciple whom Jesus loved, the heart most kindred to His own in all the Apostolic band. To S. Luke the stooping of the Divine to the human, to S. John the uplifting of the human to the Divine, being each respectively the essence of the Incarnation, would naturally determine their choice of the material available to both. The trouble of modern criticism is that it has left no room for a world revolutionising Personality. There is no life, no force, no authority in the Jesus Whom it presents to us. It gives us Christologies, but no Christ,

[1] It must not be forgotten that S. Matth. xi. 25–27, and S. Luke x. 21 do in fact contain in miniature the whole Johannine Christology; the same is true of S. Mark x. 36.

ideas, but no driving, world-compelling power. We may well apply to it Professor Wallace's saying (*Lectures and Essays*, p. 284): "Personal action is distinguished from the operation of natural law, or from the authority of mere ideas which are true, but do not exist. The idea has to be incarnated in flesh and blood. Hence the influence of great men in history, the force of a real Personality." We have tried to show that the New Testament has preserved for us that Personality—not merely a record concerning Him, nor a lay figure, clothed with ideas borrowed from Greek philosophy and Asiatic mystery religions.

The other quarter from which objections may be taken is that which will consider that the human element in our Lord's Person has been over-emphasised by the parallelism with Chasidist literature. It will be urged that His Divine Omniscience was aware of the secrets of the whole problem of evil, fathomed all the mysteries of the Atonement, empowered Him to forgive sin, to revise, if need were, any part even of the Decalogue, and took within its purview the Judgment of the great day—the day of the Lord. To those who thus reason it seems at least superfluous to hunt in by-paths of Jewish literature, for thoughts of which it is enough to say that they proceeded from the wisdom of God that was in Him. The objection is one to which much fuller treatment must be given hereafter. For the present it is enough to say that if the prayers of Jesus were real prayers, coming from the depths of His Humanity, so, no doubt, were His meditations real meditations, devout studies of the mind and will of His Heavenly Father. Our purpose has been to show that there is no need to connect them with Neo-Platonism, nor with any other

system foreign to Jewish thought. The fruit of those meditations we believe Him to have summed up for us in His self-chosen title, "The Son of Man."

To conclude. The impression of Christ stamped on every page of the New Testament is the impression of *authority*. Whether He is calling disciples to Himself, teaching the multitudes on the mountain, healing disease, casting out devils, rebuking hypocrites, forgiving sins, solving problems of the Law, feeding the multitude, hushing the storm, raising the dead, revising the law of the Sabbath or of divorce, announcing the doom of Zion, foretelling the Day of Judgment, preparing the disciples for His departure, submitting to arrest, facing the Sanhedrim, making answer to Pilate, opening Paradise to the penitent thief, giving commission to the disciples after His resurrection, or about to ascend into Heaven, always, in all conditions, though He is not doing His own will, but the will of Him Who sent Him, His words, His actions, His rebukes, His commands, are those of One Who is conscious of supreme and indisputable authority. His very prayers are not without that tone. "Father, I will." "Father, glorify Thy Name." It is little wonder that His adversaries asked, "By what authority doest Thou these things? or Who gave Thee this authority to do these things?"—(S. Mark xi. 28.)

A question which Christ refused to answer. For the answer was in the consciences of His questioners. The judge within them responded to the authority of the judge without. The authority of Christ for all time will lie in His dealing with sin, and especially in His judgment of sin.

The ultimate seat of all judgment is in God. In Him is supreme righteousness, and therefore the supreme

authority to condemn sin. But that condemnation cannot be recognised by man as just, unless the conscience of man is so raised as to recognise to the full the righteousness of God, and the justice of the condemnation that proceeds from Him. Conscience involves personality. Where there is no Person, there is no conscience. Now we have seen that human personality according to Kant's definition lies in the union of the contingent and finite life with the absolute and divine reason. But that union is an aspiration rather than an accomplished fact. Man absolutely united with God would be merged, swallowed up in God. Hence the necessity for a new Personality, a Personality in which the divine and human could co-exist—the Divine in the fulness of supreme righteousness, the human in the full consciousness of the nearness, the danger, the never-ending insidious approaches of sin to which enlightened conscience testifies. Such a Personality could not fail to move among men with a sense of authority. For there is no other authority over man at all equal to the authority of conscience, not necessarily his own but the unspoken judgment of mankind. To use the words of another Mozely—the Rev. J. K. Mozely in a sermon preached pefore the University of Cambridge—" Our world of temporal successions of free personalities, and of myriads of experiences of every type and variety, needs some expression of the moral law, which, while it must be the act of a free Personality encumbered by its environment, as all personalities are encumbered, must also be an act which links it to God's eternal order so that its norm and authority is of eternal significance—an act which shall be no mere contingent fact of history, such as Lessing repudiated as any valid

ground for the eternal truths of reason, but an act which once and for all establishes the world on moral lines."

Such an act was the coming down of the Son of Man from heaven : not His future coming only, to which our thoughts naturally turn in this connection, but His first coming also, culminating in the Cross. For as Mr. Mozely finely says in the same sermon, " The cross ought not to be an intellectual puzzle nor a sentimental appeal ; it is the condemnation and expiation of sin coming by an adequate acknowledgement of the guilt of sin and confession of the holiness of God's dealing with it. And the sentence passes through judgment unto salvation." He, in Whom was the complete union of Godhead and manhood, identified Himself with the root sin of the world, its separation from God, and identified Himself also with the Father's will, the condemnation and sentence passed on that sin, so that He might save the world. For the end of His mission was not judgment, but salvation through the confession of guilt and judgment. The faith of the sinner, while it relates to the historical Person and work of Christ, is neither assent to a historical statement as such, nor to a metaphysical or theological interpretation thereof, but self-surrender to Him Who by His coming declared His will to save, and by the Cross won the power to save. The Son of Man, as He was on earth, so is now, the Sinners' Friend.

CHAPTER IX

THE PERSONALITY OF CHRIST IN RELATION TO HIS USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The unique Personality of Christ reviewed.—Only His historical existence accounts for the portrait in the New Testament.—The value of this Personality in reference to the Old Testament needs examination.—The Omnipotence of Christ not used so as to defeat the Incarnation.—So His Omniscience did not exclude reality of His human reason.—The Old Testament Scriptures: How regarded by Jews of the First Century, A.D.—How treated by the Scribes (Schürer).—How used by our Lord: 1. For personal devotion; 2. For edification and instruction; 3. Direction as to His Father's Will, whence a Messianic conception contrary to that of Scribes.—Appeal to those who dismiss the whole enquiry by reference to our Lord's Divinity.—Christ as a devout student of the Law.—His study of its inner meaning reveals to Him the necessity of His death, and its relation to O.T. doctrine of atonement.—His view of use of the Old Testament after His Resurrection: 1. Discards the merely historical; 2. Discards the fanciful use; 3. Teaches the disciples, and through them the Church, how to use it.—Not writing His own gospel, but revealing the Gospel that is in the Old Testament (Harnack).—Stress laid on *spiritual* use of the Old Testament.—Inferences as to our right use: Not as a code of laws, but as teaching religion to be manifest in details of daily life.—Love the key.—Thus we are freed from primitive "taboos" of the Old Testament.—Could not He Who used "taboos" temporarily use also cosmogonies, etc., *temporarily* ?—The Fall of Man true apart from the Adam story.—Hooker's warnings as to misuse of Scripture.

Our reflections thus far have led us to find in the Personality of Christ a Personality not only unqiue in the experience of mankind, but also distinct from all human personalities and *sui generis*. The worship which is manifestly accorded to Him as God in the New Testament, we found to have a justification (1) in His attitude to God as His Father in a sense in which that Sonship does not belong to humanity; (2) in his entire freedom

from the dark background which sin creates in the most saintly human beings and in proportion to their saintliness; (3) in the absolute sanity of His mind and belief about Himself although He claimed "all-embracing and universal" authority as His rightful heritage. In ordinary men the union of the finite with the Infinite is a tendency and aspiration. If it were complete the finite would be merged in the Infinite. But in the Personality of Christ we found, not only the actual experience of limitations imposed by physical laws and conflicting independent wills, but a full consciousness of His humanity repeatedly expressed in His self-chosen title "the Son of Man." We have seen also the quality of that humanity, how "its reality and content were manifested by the extent to which He appropriated a heritage of ideas and interests "common to all mankind. Others called Him Son of David. He called Himself Son of Man. There is probably no fact in history better substantiated than His use of this most significant title. Our contention has been that only the historical existence of such a being could have secured for us the portraiture of the New Testament—and that, we shall not hesitate to add, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit keeping the writers to facts rather than their own fancies, and directing the Church to recognise the authority of writers so inspired.

A task exacting still closer attention lies before us—that is, the attitude of Jesus Christ to the Old Testament Scriptures. It is easy to make certain sweeping statements on one side or the other: either to say that our Lord, in virtue of His Divine omniscience, must have known and told us the truth about the author of the Pentateuch and the historicity of the story of Jonah,

or to say that belief in our Lord's manhood is destroyed by ascribing to Him this kind of knowledge. But it would be useful, if it is possible, and so far as it is possible and consistent with reverence, to approach our subject with such assistance as we may derive from what we have learnt of His Personality. For that seems to be the most certain clue within our reach.

We have first to consider what we mean by Divine attributes such as Omnipotence and Omniscience. It is not true, for instance, to say that because God is Omnipotent, therefore He can do all things. For God cannot do wrong without ceasing to be God. Nor can He act capriciously and inconsistently, so as to defeat His own purposes. If He is "working His purposes out," He cannot do that which will defeat them. Assuming then that He willed to take our nature upon Him, He would in so doing limit His own Omnipotence in the Personality so employed, as at first He had in measure limited it in the creation of man. It seems better to think of self-restraint and self-limitation than of the abdication suggested by self-emptying. Self-restraint implies love. It implies a cautious, tender use of Omnipotence which would in fact add glory to Omnipotence. It is the idea suggested by the words, "Thinkest Thou that I cannot beseech My Father, and He shall even now send Me more than twelve legions of angels?"—(S. Matt. xxvi. 53.) It is suggested by, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me."—(S. Matt. xxvi. 39.) It is suggested, indeed, by all the prayers of our Lord. But for the self-restraint of His Omnipotence, He would have had no occasion to pray. The mere exercise of His will would have sufficed for all His ends. Indeed, more than once,

the breaking through this self-restraint and use of Omnipotence appears to have taken the form of Temptation. "If Thou art the Son of God, cast Thyself down."—(S. Matt. iv. 6.) "If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross."—(S. Matt. xxvii. 40.) The challenge ceases to be a temptation and becomes a well-deserved taunt, if Jesus was in fact unable either to cast Himself down from the Temple pinnacle, or to come down from the cross, just as the thieves who hung beside Him were unable. But, since He was indeed God Omnipotent, His refusal to accept the challenge to confound His enemies, and to establish Himself as the triumphant Messiah, was the supreme exhibition of His Love. Son of God He was, but for us men, and for our sakes, in that dark hour He remained also Son of Man.

This consideration of His Omnipotence casts light on His Omniscience. He was omniscient within the limits imposed by His self-chosen Manhood. Is it not true that the restraints on His Omniscience were more exacting than on His Omnipotence? For man is nearer to God in respect of his reason than in respect of his bodily and physical functions. The human reason in Jesus, if it was not to be merged and lost in the Divine, must have its real state of nescience, of growth in knowledge through docility, through experience, through meditation. If we deny this, we do in fact deny the Manhood of Jesus Christ, and also His knowledge of, and sympathy with, our infirmities. For how large a portion of our troubles, and even of our sins, is due to our mistakes! The infallibility of Jesus—we say it with all reverence and consciousness of our fallibility—was not due to the superseding of human fallibility by Divine Omniscience. It was due to the intimate relation

between the Divine and human in one Personality, and was consistent with the full experience of His Humanity. No one supposes, for instance, that the Son of Man used His Omniscience to concern Himself with modern scientific discoveries, such as the use of steam, electricity, or radium. The self-limitation of His Omniscience is not to be ascertained by *a priori* guesses or pronouncements. We are soon out of our depths in fathoming such an Ocean. All that we can do is to turn to the records and ascertain the facts.

Now the position of the Old Testament in Judaism at this era is described by Schürer (*Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Division II, Vol. 1, p. 306.) as follows: "The fact most essentially conclusive for the religious life of the Jewish people during the period under consideration is that the law, which regulated not only the priestly service, but the whole life of the people in their religious, moral and social relations, was acknowledged as given by God Himself. Its every requirement was a requirement of God from His People, its most scrupulous observance was therefore a religious duty, nay, the supreme and in truth the sole religious duty. The whole piety of the Israelite consisted in obeying with fear and trembling the law given him by God in all its particulars. Hence the specific character of Israelite piety during this period depends on the acknowledgment of this dignity of the law."

In this faith and under this discipline Jesus was brought up from childhood. Schürer also quotes (Division II., Vol. 11, p. 48) Josephus and Philo to show that children "from their first consciousness had the law engraven on their souls," and were brought up in it, "so to speak, from their swaddling clothes." He

holds that elementary schools existed even in the provinces, and that instruction in reading was given as well as oral teaching. Instruction in reading implies access to books.

To knowledge of the text of Scripture the Scribes added (1) elaborate deductions drawn from the law so as to make it cover all the incidents of daily life ; (2) edifying comments and amplifications often of an exceedingly fanciful character. " These theological labours were always inventing old, and incessantly creating new material " (*cf.* " the scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven who brings forth things new and old ") " and were extended over the entire religious and ethical department. *It was owing to them that the whole circle of religious ideas in Israel had received in the time of Christ on the one hand a fanciful, on the other a scholastic character.* (The italics are Schürer's.) For the religious development was no longer determined and directed by the actual religious productivity of the prophets, but in part by the action of an unbridled imagination, not truly religious though dealing with religious objects, and in part by the scholastic reflections of the learned." —(Schürer, Division II., Vol. 1, p. 345.)

Hence the attention of Israel was directed to eschatology, to the condition of the future world, to the glories of the heavenly world and to philosophical problems. The sayings of the Rabbis were sedulously inculcated, and their authority was decisive, in proportion to the fame of the Rabbi quoted, or to the verdict of a majority in disputed instances. These decisions were " the tradition of the elders " referred to in S. Matt. xv. 2 and elsewhere.

The Jewish attitude to the Old Testament may be

summed up thus. Its Divine authority was recognised unquestioningly, though not without belief that certain portions, especially the Pentateuch were more directly inspired than others. The study of the Law was the noblest of all pursuits in life, and what devout enthusiasm it could raise we know from Psalm cxix. But the same study might become, and did become, scholastic and barren, until the law was found to be an intolerable burthen. Pious imagination also ran riot in it and overloaded it with a superstructure of unedifying fable. Such was the position of the Old Testament Scriptures when the Christ came. How did He treat them? To what use did He apply them?

The uses of the Old Testament by our Lord may be classified roughly under three main heads: (1) Personal devotion; (2) edification of His disciples and the people; (3) direction as to the course which His Father had laid out for Him.

(1) The devotional use of Scripture by our Lord appears in a number of phrases and turns of sentences consciously or unconsciously borrowed from the Old Testament. It is true that our Lord probably used Aramaic, and that the New Testament comes to us in Greek, and that correspondence with the LXX must have been the work of the Evangelists. But we need not on that account doubt that the correspondence is a faithful reproduction of our Lord's own words. We have there a sufficient number of references to prove that the mind of Jesus was saturated with Scripture. The following instances will exemplify this point. "The City of the great King"; "Enter into thy chamber and shut thy door"; "We prophesied in Thy Name"; "Depart from Me all ye that work iniquity"; "I came to set a

man against his father," etc.; "Art thou exalted unto heaven"?; "Rest for your souls"; "The just shall shine forth as the sun"; "He shall give to each according to his deed"; "He sendeth forth the sickle"; "Having eyes see ye not?", etc.; "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched"; "This do and thou shalt live"; "to seek and to save the lost"; "the days of vengeance"; "One shepherd." Besides such phrases as these we note also the use of Scripture in the hour of temptation, "It is written," and, above all, in the agony of the garden, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful," and in the supreme conflict upon the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"; "I thirst"; "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The variety of the books from which the quotations are taken is proof that "the sword of the Spirit" was a veritable part of the armour of Jesus.

(2) *Edification and Instruction.*—We shall not here set out in full all the passages included under this head. Specimens must suffice. We note, then, that our Lord made use of types, such as Jonah, the Brazen Serpent, the Manna, and "the Blood of the Covenant"—picture prophecies, as we might call them. But this use was comparatively infrequent. Much more commonly He enforced His instructions or warnings by reference to historical incidents, such as the use of the Shewbread by David and his followers, the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, the preaching of Jonah, the mission of Elijah to the Gentiles, Naaman and the widow of Sarepta, the catastrophe of the Flood, the destruction of Sodom, the story of Lot's wife. Sometimes He turned to the Old Testament to support Him in controversy with His adversaries. "Did not Moses give you the

Law ? " ; " Moses accuseth you " ; " Moses gave you not circumcision " ; " Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day " ; " Ye are Abraham's seed " ; " Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of Me." But in one respect His use of the Scriptures, and specially of the Law, ran counter to all Jewish prepossessions and indicated possession of authority greater than the Law itself. It is hard for us, familiar as we are with the New Testament and with long tradition of teaching based on it, to imagine the impression made by our Lord's interpretation of parts of the Decalogue, by His correction of the Rabbinic teaching of " Corban," and especially by His criticism of the Mosaic law of divorce and of the current Sabbath traditions. More wonderful, however, than all of these was His saying by which He swept away the whole distinction between clean and unclean meats. " This He said making all meats clean."—(S. Mark vii. 19.) We are forced to ask ourselves once more, " By what authority He did these things ? " We have alluded to the subject in general terms. But in view of our examination of the personality of Christ further comment is necessary, though we reserve it till after the next heading.

(3) *Direction as to the Course which the Father had laid out for Him.*—Consciousness of a Divine Mission was manifest in all our Lord's words and actions. But what was the nature of this Mission ? Thirty years in the home and workshop of Nazareth did little to reveal it. The secret of the prayers, studies and meditations of those thirty years has never been disclosed. But the herald voice of the Baptist was instantly recognised by Jesus as the call to proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven, and His own place in it. " The Spirit of the Lord is

upon Me, because He anointed Me."—(S. Luke iv. 18.) At once He began to preach good tidings to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty the bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. But, in the Mission so begun, there appeared no definite aim. We read of wanderings to and fro with no manifest goal in sight, gathering and dispersing of multitudes, the selection of a chosen few, not specially gifted, not men of foresight or influence; but the distinctive features of a Mission, concentration of purpose, method, progressive advance were conspicuously absent. The herald, now a prisoner in the dungeon of Herod, began to despair, "Art Thou He that cometh or look we for another?"—(S. Matt. xi. 3.) At last the secret came out. No sooner had Peter acknowledged Him to be the Christ of God than He replied, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests and the Scribes, and be killed, and after three days rises again."—(S. Mark viii. 31.) This was the Mission; the Cross and the Resurrection.

This conception of the Messianic Mission was, in the first place, entirely contrary to the accepted belief of His contemporaries. That belief Schürer has summed up as follows, analysing for the purpose the great Apocalyptic works. According to these, there would occur (1) the last tribulation and perplexity; (2) the coming of Elijah the forerunner; (3) the appearing of the Messiah—a human King and ruler endowed by God with special gifts and powers; (4) the last attack of the hostile powers; (5) the destruction of the same; (6) the renovation of Jerusalem; (7) the gathering of the dispersed; (8) the Kingdom of glory in Palestine; (9) the

renovation of the world; (10) the general resurrection; (11) the last Judgment. Our Lord did indeed foretell, in words taken from the Old Testament, many of these events. The rising of nations, the time of tribulation, the coming of the Son of Man in glory, the gathering of the nations to judgment. But all of these were postponed to His own crucifixion, "He must be numbered with the transgressors," the stone chosen of God, "must be rejected by the builders," the sign of Jonah must be fulfilled, the Son of Man must be lifted up as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness. To these express quotations must be added our Lord's use of the Psalms, the xli. 9, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against Me," the xxii., with all its marvellous forecast of the incidents of the crucifixion, and the xlii., "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" Still, when all these are collected, it is apparent that it was no ordinary insight into Scripture which fastened upon suffering as the first and most essential characteristic of the Mission of the Son of Man. Textual quotations do not carry us far enough.

It is possible, no doubt, to dismiss all reflection concerning our Lord's use and teaching o the Law by summary reference to the Divine in His Personality. He interpreted the Law, because He was the author of the Law. He modified or rescinded it by the same power by which He imposed it. But this reasoning does, in fact, merge the Human in the Divine. At the most important point, His attitude to the Old Testament, His Humanity, disappears. We are at once on the road to the Docetic, the unreal, phantom, Christ, Who never

was truly Man. The Incarnation, which is the foundation of all our faith disappears.

This point deserves more attention than it commonly receives from many of those for whose use this book is specially intended. With the deepest respect for their sincere piety, and for their regard for the Word of God, which called their spiritual life into being, and has sustained it, a very earnest entreaty is addressed to them to consider all that is involved in too hasty recourse to our Lord's Divinity for solution of all Old Testament problems. Especially this loss is involved: that we no longer have the companionship of our Lord in our study of the Divine Word—the problems which occurred to Him in His boyhood, with which He confronted the doctors, disappear: the lessons in His Mother's lap, the teaching of Joseph, the lessons at school, the readings and expositions in the Synagogue, His own private meditations—all these become unreal, for He, as Divine, had nothing to learn. It would seem that Bible study is robbed of more than half its joy if the Child Jesus, the Boy Jesus, the Man Jesus, is no longer a fellow-learner with ourselves. It is true that we cannot too jealously guard the Divinity of Jesus. Nor can we too jealously guard His true humanity.

Now it was among the sayings of the Chasidim that "only the Messiah would perfectly reveal the inner meaning of the Law." We may imagine with what zeal Jesus devoted Himself to its study. Of the whole Law the most prominent, to the Jews the most sacred part, was its ritual, the prescribed method of approach to God. We have no record that He offered any sacrifice except possibly the Passover. But we know that He attended besides the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles,

the Feast of Dedication, and an unnamed feast. We know also that He loved the Temple, was jealous for its honour, observed the children who gathered there, the poor who made their offerings, the postures and prayers of its worshippers. He taught there daily in His last week on earth. He paid His quota for the support of its services. But all the while He knew that it was doomed to destruction, and that its whole ritual must perish with it. What then was the inner meaning of the Law? Must the only method of approaching God that had Divine authority perish from the earth?

In the Baptist's words, "Behold the Lamb of God" (S. John i. 36.), lay the clue for solution of this question. The inner meaning of the Law, more than any textual quotations, necessitated a suffering Messiah. Far more significant than His interpretations of the commandments, or even His repeal of the laws of divorce or of unclean foods, were the words, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Myself."—(S. John xii. 32.) Into those words entered the whole Personality of the Son of God, Who was also Son of Man: all His knowledge of the world's sin, all His knowledge of the righteousness and of the love of the Father, all His compassion for the sins and infirmities of Mankind, His consecration as the Lord's Anointed, to be not only King but Priest, not only Priest but victim, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He abolished the ritual law by fulfilling it in His own Person. It is surpassingly strange that those who admit that this interpretation of the death of Christ was familiar to Paul and to John, should find it hard to believe that it could not occur to Christ Himself. If we believe in the Incarnation at all, it is more natural surely

to attribute to Christ Himself this interpretation of His death as an atonement for the sin of the world, than to assign it to any merely human interpreter.

But it is beyond question that this revelation of the inner meaning of the Law raised at once the question of the value of the rest of the Old Testament. Our Lord's use of it became forthwith a matter of the highest significance. Was the whole of the Old Testament to be jettisoned as an imperfect and transitory scheme of revelation? Was it to be regarded as a museum of Jewish antiquities, a show-room in future collections of "comparative religion"—a sacred book of the East to take its rank with the sayings of Buddha, Confucius and Zarathrusta? Or was it to be set higher than these as a record of progressive revelation from which readers might profitably quarry stones, each as it seemed best for himself for his own spiritual edifice? Or was it to remain for all time a unique message of God to the world by which He prepared the way for the Christ?

There can be no question that this last answer represents truly the attitude of our Lord to the Old Testament.

First, it should be noted that He did not use it as mere Jewish history. In this respect there is a strong contrast between His use of it and that which appears in the Acts of the Apostles. Both S. Stephen and S. Paul recite outlines of Jewish history, apparently as a kind of creed, to lead up to the point which they wish to prove. At the point where the Apostles would so have used it, that is, in the trial before the Sanhedrim, our Lord is simply silent. In fact, He is the Judge. The Sanhedrin is on its trial.

Secondly, our Lord did not borrow Rabbinic authority, did not use the scholastic methods nor the fanciful

interpretations of the Scribes. Schürer admits that the New Testament use of the Scriptures is remarkable for its enlightenment. To whom but our Lord Himself was this enlightenment due? Schürer notes, indeed, one or two exceptions, and among these points to our Lord's use of the words, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,"—(S. Matt. xxii. 32) in proof of the resurrection of the dead. It is interesting to note that in the Apocalyptic Testament of Judah xxv. 1 we have the link, present no doubt to the mind of our Lord and of His hearers, but probably not present to the mind of Schürer: "After these things shall Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob arise unto life." It was no strange idea then that the Patriarchs were living unto God, waiting for their resurrection until "after these things." What things? Let the Testament unfold them, and we shall see that the whole passage cannot have been far from the thoughts of Christ in the week of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. "After these things (*i.e.*, your return from captivity) shall a star arise to you from Jacob in peace, and a man shall arise like the sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in meekness and righteousness, and no sin shall be found in him, and the heavens shall be opened unto him, to pour out the Spirit, the blessing of the Holy Father; and He shall pour out the spirit of grace upon you, and ye shall be unto Him sons in truth, and ye shall walk in His commandments first and last. Then shall the sceptre of My Kingdom shine forth, and from your root shall arise a stem, and from it shall grow a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles, to save and judge all that call upon the Lord. After these things shall Abraham, Isaac and Jacob arise unto life."

The whole passage is of extraordinary interest. It illustrates the way in which Jesus Christ in the fulness of His Divine human Personality, while avoiding the fantastic interpertations of the Scribes, which made void the Old Testament, nevertheless used all that was best and purest in Jewish thought " to unfold the inner meaning of the Law."

Thirdly, besides His own personal use of the Scriptures for devotion and meditation, in which use our Lord made Himself one with us, not falling back, as it were, on His Divinity to supersede the written word, but sharing it with us for our prayers, temptations and trials, He also used it *for purposes of instruction*, and specially for the instruction of His disciples. He had to prepare them for the time when He should be taken from them. Then they would have to meet not only hostile inquiries of adversaries, but also the very natural doubts and uncertainties of converts gathered in from Judaism. And since the Crucified was to draw all men unto Himself a standard must be ready to correct Gentile polytheism, to purify the laxity of heathen morals, to speak with the authority of written law while the New Testament was not yet in being. For all these purposes the output of His Divine Omniscience might have furnished the requisite standard. Jesus might have written His own Gosepl. But what use could the disciples have made of it ? By the very nature of its composition it must have used language and ideas unintelligible to the disciples and their hearers. At all events, our Lord did not so use His Omniscience, and the fact that He did not do so should make us cautious in applying it to difficulties that have arisen in this connection. On the contrary, He taught them, textually

it would appear, from the Old Testament. He used both the methods and the arguments which they would most readily grasp. He met them, if we may say it with all reverence, as every good teacher meets his scholars on ground that is common to both. He met them on the ground of their common humanity. When once this truth is firmly grasped, a vast number of difficulties disappears. We are relieved from speculations as to the "self-emptying" of the Divine Being, the possibility of it, the extent of it, the manner of it. We have no occasion to put ancient beliefs into conflict with modern science, nor to encumber ourselves with the Martha-cares of Higher Criticism. We can choose Mary's part, and sit at Jesus' feet while we listen to the Son of Man instructing the sharers of His Humanity. Words already quoted from the *Testimonia* bear repetition at this point. "Nothing is clearer than that the Old Testament citations which go to make up the *Testimonia Book* are there because of a looking back to the point of view of Jesus Himself. *We* may find fault both with the passages chosen and the use to which they are put, for we are of the twentieth century, and so we are far away from the first century mind of Palestine unto which the revelation was made. A closer consideration should lead us to see that a creative mind was at work providing others with a language with which they could understand and express the mind of Jesus Christ." When we remember that Jesus was educating His disciples for a definite task that lay before them, the precise kind of honour and authority which He attached to the Old Testament becomes apparent.

The nature of that honour and authority is well expressed by Harnack in his *History of Dogma* (Vol. I.,

p. 42, translation). "Whatever source of comfort and strength Christianity even in the New Testament has possessed or does possess up to the present, is for the most part taken from the Old Testament viewed from a Christian standpoint in virtue of the impression of the Person of Jesus. Even its dross was changed into gold; its hidden treasures were brought forth; and while the earthly and transitory were recognised as symbols of the heavenly and eternal, there rose up a world of blessings, of holy ordinances, and of sure grace prepared by God from eternity. One could justly make oneself at home in it; for its long history guaranteed a sure future and a blessed close: while it offered comfort and certainty in all the changes of life to every individual heart that would only raise itself to God."

The following passage also may be quoted in this connection (Vol. I., p. 52): "By recognising the Old Testament as a book of Divine revelation the Gentile Christians received along with it the religious speech which was used by the Jewish Christians, were made dependent on the interpretation which had been used from the very beginning, and even received a great part of the Jewish literature which accompanied the Old Testament. But the possession of a common religious speech and literature is never a mere outward bond of union, however strong the impulse be to introduce the old familiar contexts into the newly-acquired speech. The Jewish, that is, the Old Testament, element divested of its national particularity, has remained the basis of Christendom. It has saturated this element with the Greek spirit, but has always clung closely to the main idea, faith in God as creator and ruler of the world."

We may take it as ascertained fact that Jesus used

the method of textual Scripture proof in instructing His disciples, and that He did thereby magnify the importance of the written Word as a sure credential of His mission. In this sense S. Peter [1] while referring to the Transfiguration as evidence of the Divine Sonship of Christ, adds, "Even surer is the word of prophecy, which we have" (Bigg on S. Peter, etc., *Intern. Crit. Comm.*, p. 367, on 2 Peter i. 19.) By this use of the Old Testament our Lord built, so to speak, its *ipsissima verba* into the fabric of the faith which He left behind Him. He used its authority as the credential of His own. But it must be added, if we are to be true to facts, that His whole use of it was a *spiritual* use. The Scripture testified of Himself: it provided spiritual armour: it witnessed against impenitence, hardness of heart, and refusal to acknowledge truth in a new and unexpected form. It is in this respect that His appeals to Moses are most frequent. Moses was to be the great accuser of the generation that rejected Him. Further, our Lord insisted on the superiority of the spirit over the letter. "I desire mercy and not sacrifice."—(S. Matt. ix. 13.) The whole law is summed up in the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."—(S. Mark xii. 30.) Judgment and the love of God were more important than the tithing of herbs.—(S. Matt. xxiii. 23.) He heartily approved the saying that love of God and of one's neighbour were more than all whole burnt offerings and

[1] The Petrine authorship of the second Epistle is here a sumed. If it be questioned the argument is not affected. The writer, whoever he is, makes prophecy a stronger evidence than the voice from heaven on the Mount of Transfiguration.

sacrifices.—(S. Mark xii. 33, 34.) A challenge may be safely thrown out to produce a single reference of Christ to the Old Testament which has not a definite spiritual bearing, or a single case in which He exalts the letter of the Old Testament at the expense of its spiritual force.

In view of these facts it would seem to be clear that our Lord's example justifies us in insisting on the Divine authority of the Old Testament as (1) containing a communication from God to men concerning His Being, His character, His relation to the world and His government of it; (2) as a witness to His preparation for the Incarnation; (3) as a personal message of warning, encouragement and guidance to those who with faith receive it; (4) as a witness against those who, having received it, misuse it. On the other hand, we have not the authority of our Lord to use the Old Testament: (1) as sanctioning all political or ecclesiastical institutions which it seems to sanction, nor (2) as moralising acts or reflections essentially immoral, nor (3) as a manual of science or of secular history. Such uses have no authorisation from the recorded words of our Lord.

The essential point to be observed in our Lord's attitude to the Old Testament is that He reverenced it too highly to use it as the Scribes used it. They used it as a starting point for logical deductions, a sphere for the display of ingenuity in mapping out the whole of life according to the requirements of the law. By this process all spiritual life was destroyed. The motive went for nothing; the external act performed to achieve righteousness was everything. This was the soul-destructive veneration for the law, from which Christ set us free.

He broke the bondage of the letter that He might restore to us the freedom and power of the Spirit.

But it is useful to track down this error of the Scribes more clearly, since by so doing we may find our way to surmount other difficulties. The fault of this interpretation was not that it brought religion into the matters of daily ife. As Professor Wallace very truly says (p. 162): "It is against all misconceptions like this (the unimportance of the common round of duties) that the older Hebrew Scriptures which Christianity presupposes and out of which it grows, are of permanent value. . . . (The Israelites) knew that even if religion is not a matter of meats and drinks, meat and drink are no trifles which religion may ignore. They knew that religion is intimately wrapped up with the tillage of the field, the pasture of the flocks, the rules and modes of wedlock, the custom of the market, sanitary rules, with the treatment of disease. They may have been mistaken in some of their views, but they were certainly right in their main thesis; and the whole bent of modern progress is toward doing what they did in a completer way. To them religion and ethics left no sphere of life untouched." What, then, was the error of the Scribes, who apparently worked out this sound and important principle with inexhaustible patience and endless detail? Was it not the assumption that the whole code of life was explicitly or implicitly contained in the law, and must therefore be made the matter of legal enactment? Whereas our Lord insisted that the love of our neighbours not only prompts and enables us to do what is right, but gives us discernment to discover what is the right thing to be done. Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law. It meets every new emergency and deals

with it unselfishly—not with the selfish object of reward. For religion may be made very selfish.

By this simple but profound ruling Christ freed religion from a vast number of primitive taboos, sanctioned wisely, as we have seen, under the Mosaic law, but for all that taboos that have done their duty. Room was made for a new ethical standard: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—(1 Cor. x. 31.) "The old things are passed away, behold they are become new."—(2 Cor. v. 17.)

But if Divine sanction was wisely given to certain primitive rules of morality which were in time to be done away, is it not also conceivable at least that Divine sanction was given to primitive traditions as to the origin of the world, the fall, the flood, the deluge, the choice of the Patriarchs, and the story of their early wanderings, that by these, purified from old heathen taints, a conception of Divine working might be imparted such as the primitive world could receive? We do not instruct infants out of scientific manuals and constitutional law books. Is it impossible to think that God should have had His infant school for mankind, and specially for Israel? If we insist that in the Old Testament Scriptures we have a complete record of world-origins, are we not making the same mistake which the scribes made about the Law? Are we not using the Old Testament in a way in which Christ did not use it? And if S. Paul went beyond the example of Christ as recorded in the Gospels, and writing under guidance of the Holy Spirit, used these primitive records as the foundation of doctrinal arguments, may we not say that S. Paul himself was not necessarily freed by the Spirit from the

Rabbinic methods under which he had been trained? His doctrine may be, and in fact is, more true than the argument by which he supported it. Scientific knowledge tends to confirm rather than to weaken it.

Other difficulties are, no doubt, presented by the foregoing considerations, but the soundness of the principle itself is incontrovertible, that is, that our Lord has taught us that the true use of the Old Testament is its spiritual use, and its true authority a spiritual authority. Whatever other authority is claimed for it must make good its claim not by an appeal to the Omniscience of Jesus Christ, nor by the mere assertion that God could not use other than historical matter for conveying spiritual truth. For the present we may conclude with two notable sayings of Richard Hooker (*Ecclesiastical Polity*, Vol. I., p. 323, Keble's edition): "It is not to be required, nor can be exacted at our hands that we should yield unto anything other assent than such as doth answer the evidence which is to be had of that we assent unto," and again, Vol. I., p. 336, "Whatsoever is spoken of God or of things pertaining to God otherwise than as the truth is, though it seem an honour, it is an injury. And as incredible praises given unto men do often abate and impair the credit of their deserved consideration: so we must likewise take great heed lest in attributing to Scripture more than it can have, the incredibility of that do cause even those things which it hath indeed most abundantly to be less reverently esteemed."

NOTE.—It may be suggested that in our insistence in this chapter on our Lord's perfect Manhood we have overlooked what was said (p. 105) "There is more truth than some would have us believe in holding that he who would know the Manhood of Christ must study Him as Man, as Son of Man, rather than as *a*

Man. For it was not only in sharing our external conditions that He realised His Manhood. It was rather in transcending them, and in raising Manhood to its most godlike capacities, as He testified by His use of the title "Son of Man." Or again, that His Messianic power to unfold the true meaning of Scripture has been in this chapter forgotten.

The answer would seem to be this. Our Lord did indeed realise His Manhood not only by sharing our external conditions, but rather by transcending them and by raising Manhood to its most glorious capacities. But what are its most glorious capacities? Are they the moral or the intellectual? The answer to this question is given in the fact that the Incarnation was realised in the Personality of a devout Israelite in a peasant's home, and not in a Seneca or a Philo. Incarnation involved self-limitation, but in relation to all that made for communion with God, our Blessed Lord, in relation to the Old Testament, did in fact transcend external conditions, did raise Manhood to its most godlike capacities, did fulfil the Messianic rôle of unfolding the true meaning of the Scriptures. But it was not inconsistent with this that He should have accepted the conditions of a devout Israelite in reference to the Old Testament on its purely intellectual side. It was but repeating in another form his preference of Bethelehem and Nazareth to Rome and Alexandria.

REFERENCES BY OUR LORD TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In S. Matthew with parallels in other Gospels.

S. Matt.	O.T.	Parallels.
iv. 4	Deut. viii. 3	Lu. iv. 4
7	vi. 16	12
10	13	8
v. 3, 4	Isa. lxi. 1, 2	18, 19
5	Ps. xxxvii, 11	
21	Ex. xx. 13 ... Mk. x. 19	Lu. xviii. 20
27	14	20
31	Deut. xxiv. 1	
33	xxiii. 23	
	Ps. xv. 4	
34	Isa. lxvi. 1	
35	Ps. xlviii. 2	
38	Ex. xxi. 24	
43	Lev. xix. 18	Lu. vi. 27
48	Deut. xviii. 13	36
vi. 6	Isa. xxvi. 20	
vii. 15–22	Jer. xxiii. 14	
	xxvii. 9	
23	Ps. vi. 8	

S. Matt.	O.T.	Parallels
viii. 4	... Lev. xiv.	... Mk. i. 44 ... Lu. v. 14
11	... Mal. i. 11 ...	
ix. 13	... Hosea vi. 6 ...	
x. 15	... Gen. xix.	... Mk. vi. 11 ... Lu. xi. 12
35	... Micha vii. 6 ...	... ... xii. 49, 53
xi. 5 ...	... Isa. xxxv. 5, 6	
	lxi, 1	... Lu. vii. 22
6 ...	... viii. 14, 15	 23
10...	... Mal. iii. 1 ...	 27
14...	... iv. 5 ...	
23	... Isa. xiv. 13, 15	... x. 15
29...	... Jer. vi. 16 ...	
xii. 3 ...	... 1 Sam. xxi. 6	Mk. ii. 25 ... Lu. vi. 3
7 ...	... Hosea vi. 6	
xii. 38...	... Jonah	
42...	... 2 Chron. ix. 3	... ... Lu. xi. 31
xiii. 14, 15	... Isa. vi. 9, 10...	Mk. iv. 12 ... viii. 10
32	... Dan. iv. 12 ...	32
41	... Zeph. i, 3 ...	
43	... Dan. xii. 3	
xv. 4 ...	... Ex. xx. 12	
4 ...	... xxi. 17 ...	Mk. vii. 10
8, 9	... Isa. xxix. 13...	6, 7
10...	... Lev. contrast	
24...	... Ezek. xxxiv. 16	... ... Lu. xv.
xvi. 4...	... Jonah	
27	... Ps. lxii. 12	
	Prov. xxiv. 12	
xvii. 11	... ...	Mk. ix. 12
24	... Ex. xxx. 11 ...	
xviii. 11	... Exek. xxxiv. 16	
16	... Deut. xix. 15	
xix. 4...	... Gen. i. 27 ...	Mk. x. 6
5...	... ii. 24 ...	7
7, 8	... Deut. xxiv. 1	4
18	... Ex. xx. 13 ...	19 ... Lu. xviii. 20
19	... Lev. xix, 18 ...	xii. 31
26	... Job. xlii. 1 ...	x. 27 ... 27
xxi. 5...	... Zech. xiv. 4	
9...	... Ps. cxviii. 25, 26	Mk. xi. 9, 10 ... xix. 38
		John xii. 15
13	... Isa. lvi. 7	
	Jer. vii. 11	xi. 17 ... Lu. xix. 46
16	... Ps. viii. 2 ...	
33	... Isa. v. 1 ...	xii. 1–9... xx. 9
42	... Ps. cxviii. 22, 23	10 ... 17

* Introduced by the enemies of our Lord.

S. Matt.	O.T.	Parallels.
xxi. 44	... Dan. ii. 35, 45	 18
xxii. 29		
32	... Ex. iii. 6 (lxx.)	26 ... 37
37	... Deut. vi. 5 ...	30
44	... Ps. cx. 1 ...	36 ... 42
xxiii. 35	... 2 Chron. xxiv. 20	
38	... Jer. xxii. 5	
39	... Ps. cxviii. 26	xi. 9 ... xix. 38
xxiv. 6	... Dan. ii. 28 ...	xiii 7 ... xxi 9
7	... Isa. xix. 2 ...	8 ... 10
10	... Dan. xi. 4 ...	12 ... 16
15	... ix. 27 ...	14
21	... xii. 1 ...	19
24	... Deut. xiii. 1	22
29	... Isa. xiii. 10 ... xxxiv. 4	24 ... 25 25 ... 25
30	... Zech. xii. 12 Dan vii. 13 ...	26 ... 27
31	... Isa. xxvii. 13 Zech. ii. 6 ...	27
37, 38	Gen. vii. ...	... ... Lu. xvii, 27
xxv. 31	... Zech. xiv. 5 ...	
46	... Dan. xii. 2 ...	
xxvi. 17, etc.	Passover ...	Mk. xiv. 12 ... Lu. xxii. 7 John xiii. 1
28	... Ex. xxiv, 8 ...	Mk. xiv. 23, 24 Lu. xxii. 20
31	... Zech. xiii. 7 ...	27
38	... Ps. xlii. 5 ...	34
64	... cx. 1 Dan. vii. 13 ...	62 ... 69
xxvii. 46	... Ps. xxii. 1 ...	xv. 34

PARALLELS IN S. MARK NOT QUOTED ABOVE.

iv. 29 ...	... Joel iii. 13	
vi. 34 ...	... Num. xxvii. 17	Matt. xiv. 14
viii. 18	... Jer. v. 21 Ezek. xii. 2	
ix. 48	... Isa. lxvi. 24	
xii 29	... Deut. vi. 4 ...	*cf.* Lu. x. 27 below
xiii. 12	... Micah. vii. 6	
xiv. 18	... Ps. xli. 9	S. John xiii. 18, 26, 27

IN ST. LUKE

iv. 18, 19	... Isa. lxi. 1, 2
25	... 1 Kings xvii. 9

x. 27 ...	... Deut. vi. 5 ... Lev. xix. 18
xi. 51 ...	... Gen. iv. 8–10
xiii. 16	... Daughter of Abraham
27	... Ps. vi. 8
xvi. 31	... If they hear not, etc.
xvii. 26	... Gen. vi.
29	... xix. 24... Lot
32	... 26... Lot's wife
xix. 9	... A son of Abraham
xix. 10	... Exek. xxxiv. 16
44	... Ps. cxxxvii. 9
xxi. 22	... Hosea ix. 7 εκδικησις lxx.
24	... Zech. xii. 3
34, 35	... Isa. xxiv, 17
xxii. 37	... liii, 12
xxiii.30	... Hosea x. 8
46	... Ps. xxxi. 5
xxiv. 27	...

IN ST. JOHN

1. 51 ...	... Gen. xxviii, 12
ii. 23 ...	... Observance of Passover.
iii. 14 ...	... Num. xxi. 8
v. 1 ...	... A feast observed.
39	... Search, etc.
45...	... Moses accuser.
vi. 32...	... Moses gave you not.
45	... Isa. liv. 13
vii. ...	... Feast of Tabernacles observed.
19	... Did not Moses, etc.
22	... Moses gave you
38	... Zech. xiv. 8
viii. 17	... Deut. xix. 15
37	... Ye are the seed of Abraham.
56	... Your father Abraham rejoiced.
x. 16	... One shepherd. Ezek. xxxvii. 24
34	... Ps. lxxxii. 6
xii. 35	... Jer. xiii. 16
xiii.	... Observance of Passover.
18	... Ps. xli. 9
xv. 25	... Ps. xxxv. 19
xvi. 22	... Isa. lxvi. 14
xix. 28	... Ps. lxix, 21

CHAPTER X

THE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TO-DAY

Is spiritual value dependent on historical truth ?—Probably for some minds it is believed to be so.—Attempt to ascertain what is spiritual authority.—Definition, apparently narrow, covers large field.—What are the commands of the Old Testament ?—Their value for all mankind.—The actual influence of the Old Testament in the First Century A.D.—Illustration from Justin Martyr.—Its authority not limited to Christian use.—The spiritual use of the Old Testament in modern Israel.—Illustration from Schechter.—Its spiritual influence in Islam.—Does this spiritual influence involve the infallibility of the Old Testament writers ?

We have seen that our Lord, while departing widely from much of the current interpretation and use of the Old Testament, did nevertheless accept for Himself its Divine authority, and regard that authority as binding on others. It is equally clear that the questions raised by historical criticism as to the authorship and contents of the various books of Scripture were not within His view. He takes it for granted that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch and David of the Psalms, and He refers to the Creation, the Flood, the destruction of Sodom, and the story of Jonah as historical incidents. But, as we have already pointed out, He refers to them for their spiritual value, and it has been suggested that spiritual value is really independent of historical truth. Now this position is open to question. It may be objected, it is objected, that a fable told as a fable, may have spiritual value, but if it is told as historical fact it loses that value. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* would not have been of spiritual worth, if it

had purported to be a narrative of facts that actually occurred at a definite period. When the facts were refuted, the spiritual power of the story would have disappeared with them, at all events, for the literally minded. It is for this reason that many devout minds still cling to the historical truth of every part of the Old Testament and of every passage, and regard its Divine inspiration as inextricably involved in the truth of its records, and even in the traditional authorship of its various documents. The demand for an infallible Bible is not, as is often suggested, a mere demand for authority wherewith to silence opponents, and to save men from the trouble of observing and reasoning. The demand arises partly from an honest love of truthfulness, of discrimination between fact and fiction. Is it possible to retain the spiritual authority of the Old Testament when, to the child's simple question, "Is it really true?" we have to answer "No"?

The most direct method of meeting this difficulty is first to ask ourselves whether the Old Testament has spiritual authority? If it has not, there is no need to trouble ourselves about its veracity. It simply takes its place with the other religious books of the East, one of several interesting memorials of a bygone age. But if the Old Testament to this day exercises a spiritual authority not only over the race to which it historically belongs, but also multitudes of alien races, men of civilisations entirely different from that of ancient Judaism, it will then be important to determine whether that authority depends or not upon its consistent historical veracity.

But let us try to define "spiritual authority." It would seem to mean the power of commanding obedience

in the name of God over men in their religious belief, life and worship. The sphere appears at first sight to be very limited, for it leaves out all political conditions, the whole world of artistic and emotional creation, and observation of phenomena, reflections upon them, and the vast ranges of metaphysics and philosophy. "A narrow sphere," shall we say? But if, after all, religion is the foundation on which the rest of life is built, if a man's duty to God implies also his duty to his neighbour, if all the powers that be are ordained of God, if marriage and family relations have their sanction from God, if true art is the perception and expression of the glory of God, if science is anything more than a series of disconnected observations, if science and philosophy are unmeaning terms unless there is a reason at work all around us other than, and above, our own, then surely the sphere of religion is not narrow, but as the old Hebrews said, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the book, which commands the obedience of men in religious life, faith, and worship, is veritably the Word of the Lord to man.

When we speak of "commanding the obedience of man" we do not, of course, mean that of necessity all respond to the command. The rule of God has never been so exercised as to be inconsistent with the freewill of man. The fact that disobedience is widespread does not invalidate the fact of Divine authority. If disobedience were universal, that authority would be in itself quite unshaken. The right to command is a necessary part of the conception of a Personal God.

The Old Testament commands us to worship one God, the true God, beside Whom there is no other. He is revealed to us as a righteous Ruler Who sustains and

governs the world which He has called into being. Of His Personality there can be no question, for with great boldness many human attributes are assigned to Him. But, though these attributes appear, He is essentially a Spirit. Israel has heard His voice. His word has come to the prophets. But no sort of form or shape can be predicated of Him. Clouds and darkness are round about Him. When He visits the earth the Cloud marks His Presence, but He is Himself the King Eternal, Invisible from everlasting to everlasting God. He hates and punishes sin, but He delights in Mercy. His forgiveness is not foolish indulgence. "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mightest be feared."—(Ps. cxxx. 4.)

This God is the object of worship, so exacting on the one hand that it can only be rightly celebrated in one place, and according to one law of relentless severity, yet on the other hand attentive to the prayer of the humble and contrite heart. "Thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it. Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."—(Ps. li. 16, 17.) This apparent contradiction no doubt calls for explanation, which must be given presently. But this much appears: that the worship of God, however simple, must not be careless worship. There is an offensive familiarity which is a very long way from simplicity of worship.

Worship is vain apart from a holy life. "Lord who shall sojourn in Thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness, and speaketh truth in his heart."—(Ps. xv. 1, 2.) Certain cardinal sins, common in the

Gentile world are strenuously forbidden, bloodshed, sexual impurity, theft, falsehood and greed. Three sanctities appear on the first pages of Genesis, the sanctity of life, the sanctity of marriage, and the sanctity of the day of rest. These three go far into the social life of the world. They are owned only where the Old Testament authority is recognised. On them, as some believe, the civilisation of the world depends.

The foregoing is, of course, a very brief and imperfect summary of the spiritual authority of the Old Testament. But it is sufficient to show a few of the outstanding features of that great book as an exponent of the Divine law for man. The great marvel of it is this, that while it is the record of the preparation of a special race for the sublime service of the Incarnation, and reflects in its course the sins, the monstrous crimes, the perpetual rebellions and infidelities of the race, it does, nevertheless, reveal, as no other book in the world revealed before the coming of Christ, the essential features of faith, life, and worship in such form as to contribute a message of God to the whole world for all time.

It would need more space than is at our command, as well as a very intimate acquaintance with Jewish and Christian literature of the first century A.D. to do justice to the profound spiritual authority exercised by the Old Testament at that momentous epoch in the religious history of the world. Of its influence upon Christian thought through our Lord's recognition of its authority, the New Testament bears ample evidence. Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament gives more than 1,100 quotations in the New Testament from the Old. But for that authority it would have been impossible to guide the moral development of the early converts from

heathenism. Recruited largely from the debased proletariate of the Empire with a considerable admixture of slaves, the early Christians had to learn what was meant by "the freedom with which Christ did set them free."—(Gal. v. i) The binding and loosing of the Apostles, their discrimination between right and wrong in the sight of God, was based largely on the Old Testament. Through its pages the Holy Spirit guided them into all truth, and built up in wondrous wise the book that was to take its place by the side of the Old Testament, making by this union not two contradictory messages, but one message of God to the world, His revelation of Himself through His Prophets and in His Son. We need to have some idea of the strange convergence of Eastern religions with the outworn mythologies of Greece and Rome, and with the primitive crude worship behind these, the promises of mystery religions, the cosmological speculations, and general break down of all moral principle, at the opening of the Christian era, before we can measure the strength of the great Rock of the Old Testament in the deluge of superstition and unbelief. In another quarter, a Jewish philosopher, Philo, in trying to show that all Greek wisdom was really derived from the Old Testament, was unconsciously preparing the way for Christian Theology, but not without some danger of turning a religion into a philosophy. But, above and beyond all these, the direct nurture of spiritual life through narrative and prophetic utterance, and especially through the Psalms, proved that the power of the Old Testament was not weakened by the fall of Jerusalem nor by the destruction of the Temple. The Word of God abideth for ever. This use of the Old Testament is abundantly confirmed

by the Epistle of Barnabas (*circa* 100 A.D.) which, however, errs on the side of adherence to legalism. The best instance of the influence of the Old Testament in the Sub-Apostolic Church is to be found in the Dialogue of Justin with the Jew Trypho. The account given of the introduction to this Dialogue by Professor Gwatkin (*Church History to A.D.* 313, Vol. II., p. 16) is a most convincing proof of the power of the Old Testament in the early Church. "Justin tells the story of his own life—how he had sought for God in vain. Of his heathen teachers the Stoic knew nothing, the Peripatetic only wanted his money, and the Pythagorean required an absurd amount of learning, and a long initiation. Then came a Platonist who gave him, at any rate, a worthier conception of God. While he was thinking of these things he fell in with an old man by the seashore, who showed him that philosophy gives no clear idea of God, and referred him to the writings of the Prophets, for these things cannot be understood, unless God and His Christ give us understanding. The old man went his way, and Justin saw him no more: but the fire was kindled in his soul, and it was not long before he became a Christian." Thence arises a two days' discussion between Justin and Trypho ranging over the whole of the Old Testament, and bringing out especially the passages contained in the Book of Testimonies.

The Christian use of the Old Testament is, however, very far from exhausting the story of its spiritual authority. We have to remember that within the Jewish race itself that authority is exercised to the full up to the present day. The unworthy roots of Anti-Semitism have struck so deep in the soil of Christendom that the existence of a strong spiritual life based on the

Old Testament only, and flourishing to this very day, is often ignored. We allow the unlovely aspects of Jewish character popularised by the Press and novel-writer to hide from our eyes the truer Israel, who are indeed not far from the Kingdom of God. We forget how much Christian persecution continued through long ages, brutal, nay, often devilish, has done to degrade the race whom we ought to have loved for the Lord's own sake. The marvel is that such persecutions should not only have been survived, but have brought out, through fiery trial, the strong features of a people not unworthy of the title of God's chosen. We think of their religious literature as legalistic, and puerile, judging it by excerpts often from most unfriendly hands. But of the vast stores of the Talmud exceedingly little is known to us. Even Jewish liturgies, far more accessible, are seldom studied by Christians. Such books as Oesterley and Box's *Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, and Schecter's two books, *Studies in Judaism* and *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, deserve to be better known, if only to remind us that the Old Testament is something more than the happy hunting-ground of Higher Criticism and of religious folklore—that it is a book which, quite apart from Christian interpretation, bears vigorous spiritual fruit, inculcates teaching, and inspires prayers, not unworthy of a Divine author. As a specimen the following passage from a chapter on the Joy of the Law in Schechter's *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (p. 157) will amply repay quotation. "Here I must again be allowed personal reminiscences. The following passages in the Song of Unity are recited in some congregations on the Eve of the Day of Atonement:

"We are Thy people and Thy sheep, who delight to

obey Thy Will. But how shall we serve, since our hand hath no power, and our sanctuary is burnt with fire? How shall we serve without sacrifice and meat offering? for we are not yet come unto our rest, Neither is there water to wash away defilement; Lo! we are upon unpurified ground. But I rejoice at Thy Word, and I am come according to Thy Bidding. For it is written, I will not reprove thee for Thy sacrifices or thy burnt offerings.

"Concerning your sacrifices and your burnt offerings I commanded not your fathers.

"What have I asked and what have I sought of thee but to fear Me?

"To serve with joy and a good heart.

"Behold the broken spirit is better than sacrifice.

"And a broken heart than pure burnt offering.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.

"In sacrifice and burnt offering Thou delightest not: sin offering and burnt offering Thou has not asked.

"I will build an altar of the broken fragments of my heart, and will break my spirit within me.

"The haughty heart will I humble: yea, the haughtiness of mine eyes, and I will rend my heart for the sake of the Lord.

"My broken spirit, that is Thy sacrifice. Let it be acceptable upon Thine altar."

But only one who has seen the deep despair reflected on the faces of the worshippers, as they repeat the first stanzas bewailing the loss of sacrifice as a means of atonement, and the sudden transition to the highest degree of joy and cheerfulness at the thought expressed in the last stanzas, that it is neither burnt offering nor meat offering that God requires, but that the heart is

the real altar, and the service of the heart the real sacrifice—only one who has witnessed such a prayer-meeting will be able to conceive how little the capacity of the Rabbi to pray, and to rejoice in prayer, was affected by the rubrics, and how superficial is the common conception of onlookers on this subject." Verily, verily, hymns and teaching far less spiritual are too frequently heard in Christian congregations. Yet the Song of Unity seldom departs from the very words of the Old Testament.

The spiritual power of the Old Testament has thus received a threefold vindication (1) by reference to its religious message to the old world before the coming of Christ; (2) by its steadying and instructive influence in the all-important first two centuries of the Christian era; (3) by its authority in the best spiritual life of Israel to-day. We might add that most, if not all, of what Islam contains that has religious worth, its highest truths, the seeking after God found in certain saintly lives, its purest ethics may be traced to the Old Testament. The God Who is there revealed remains at the very heart, the innermost core of the faith of Christendom, Judaism, and Islam. We have not yet reached an answer to the questionings with which this chapter began, but it is no small gain to have been reminded that, whatever difficulties the Old Testament may present, it has nevertheless taught the world from remote ages to the present day, eternal verities with a power unequalled by that of any other book in the whole world. It is only right that this incontestable fact should stand in the forefront of all our inquiries concerning it.

Must we then believe that this spiritual value is actually dependent on the historical accuracy of all that

is recorded in the Old Testament? Is the spirit so bound up in the letter that if some minute inaccuracy were established by irrefragable proofs, the Old Testament would lose its character as *the* Divine message of God to the world? No one who has any acquaintance with manuscripts would be so rash as to maintain that position. The Old Testament through a long history has been proved to have behind it "the certainty of the Spirit and of power."—(1 Cor. ii. 4.) "Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him, God revealed [in the Old Testament] through the Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God . . . [and] we received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God."—(1 Cor. ii. 9, 10, 12.) We dare to claim absolute truth for the spiritual teaching of the Old Testament, and absolute authority. But the claim of infallibility, for the time being, of those whom the Spirit used, needs justification. Facts are terribly stubborn, and do not cease to be facts, simply because we refuse to believe them.

On the other hand, a book which, obviously, and as part of its scheme of spiritual teaching, professes to be a historical record, and is entirely at fault in its history, will have a difficulty in establishing or maintaining its spiritual value. That is the question which we must proceed to discuss.

Some Critical Findings on the Old Testament.

As this book may fall into the hands of some readers unfamiliar with the views of Higher Critics on the Old

Testament, it seems convenient at this point to insert such a brief statement, in respect of these views, as may make Chapters XI and XII more clear to such readers.

The earliest critical efforts were based on the use, in the Hebrew text, of the names Jahve and Elohim in the Pentateuch as names of God. It was thought that part of it was written by men who used the name Jahve, and part by men who used the name Elohim. But the distinction on this basis has been found so complicated that in the Oxford *Hexateuch* (*i.e.*, the Pentateuch plus the book of Joshua) the two narratives appear together as JE. They are distinguished from the priestly document called P, which has a style of its own. A comparison of Genesis xv. with Genesis xvii., both concerned with the covenant of God with Abraham, will show the careful reader some marks of difference between the two documents. Chapter xv. belongs to JE., Chapter xvii. to P. P as a document is mainly interested in the priesthood and sacrifice (almost the whole of Leviticus is assigned to P) but is by no means confined to that subject. It is an independent narrative from the creation to the entry into Canaan, incorporated with JE., and its identity has been carefully guarded throughout. The book of Joshua is now separated again by some competent critics from the first five books, and we may once more speak of the Pentateuch. Deuteronomy, commonly referred to as D, and once supposed to be the book discovered by Hilkiah in the Temple, is now by some critics assigned to a still later date. P is supposed by them to be the work of a priest, or priests, influenced by Ezekiel, but open to many later insertions.

That the whole dating of the books of the O.T. is

considerably a matter of conjecture appears not only in the article on Israel quoted in this book (p. 170) but also from the following extract from Dr. Peake's commentary on the Bible (p. 45a): "Solomon's reign is specially notable as that in which historical literature, *probably* took its rise. Great historical events, stories as to popular heroes and thrilling exploits, circulated, *no doubt*, before on the lips of the people. But their reduction to writing had *probably* not taken place up to this time. And when history began to be written, it was, *we may surmise*, the story of the immediate past. The story of David's court exhibits such intimate knowledge of the circumstances, that it is *generally* attributed to a contemporary, *possibly*, as Duhm suggests, Abiathar. This *may* have given the impulse to record the earlier history. The story of Samuel, Saul, and David, which we find in the most ancient strata of 1 Sam. i.—ii. Sam. viii. was, it *may be*, the first to be written. The oldest records of the conquest and of the Judges *may* have been next collected, and not so much later *would come* the Pentateuchal document J in its primitive form, written in Judah. The parallel document, E, was written in the Northern Kingdom *probably* before the middle of the eighth century." The italics are, of course, our own, but they indicate the extraordinary uncertainty of Higher Criticism, as to the order of the earlier historical books, and the circumstances which gave rise to their composition.

We reach more certainty with the prophets and the threatened Assyrian invasion. On these questions it is not necessary to enlarge here. But as an instance of the dismembering of prophetic books it is sufficient to point out that Dr. Peake considers that, while the main

body of Habakkuk is exilic, Chapter i. 5–11, is pre-exilic, and Chapter iii. post-exilic. He, of course, gives his reasons for these dates. Isaiah is referred to three authors at least (1) the prophet of that name in the eighth century; (2) an anonymous prophet at the close of the exile, writer of 40–55; (3) a third writer of inferior literary merit, the composer of 55–66. The Pentateuch in its present form is assigned to a date not earlier than 536 nor later than 333 B.C..

CHAPTER XI

THE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WHEN IT IS REGARDED AS "THE RECORD OF A PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

The Old Testament as the record of a progressive revelation : attractive as disposing of many difficulties ; enhanced the value of the prophets at the expense of the historical books.—On the other hand this idea lowers the authority of the Old Testament. (Eucken).—But is open to more serious objection if the record proves to be of a retrogressive revelation.—This progressive revelation as exhibited in the Old Testament.—Complicated in Higher Critical presentment : 1. By uncertainty and improbability of Higher Critical history and its hypothetical basis ; 2. By P. being made a post exilic work.—The prophetical teaching as to sacrifice.—To P. sacrifice is all important.—P. a history as well as a code.—Does not simply contain archaisms.—But makes no provision for character of offerer or for public worship.—Represents God as easily offended.—As terrible in punishment.—Not in accordance with prophetical teaching.—Even suggested to be work of false prophets.—The traditional date does not present these difficulties.—Suggestion of two religions of Israel concurrent—with D. as attempted harmony. —Higher critical history affected by preconceptions : 1. That evolution means progress ; 2. That sacredotalism is a late development in religion ; 3. That the Israelites of the Exodus were savages.

To many minds bewildered by criticism of the history, of the scientific statements, and of the ethics of the Old Testament the idea that we should regard it as the record of a progressive revelation brought great relief. The opening words of the Epistle to the Hebrews seemed to sanction this solution. "God Who in many forms and in many fragments revealed Himself to the Prophets," here was at once a sharp line drawn between the Old Testament and the New, "hath in these last days revealed Himself in His Son." We might keep the New Testament intact while we sacrificed the Old. Dr. Driver in his well-known *Introduction to the Old Testa-*

ment (Preface to seventh edition, page xi) definitely expresses this opinion. Here it seemed was an easy refuge from the necessity of reconciling Old Testament inconsistencies, from combating the calculations of Colenso, from squaring the Creation story with the discoveries of Darwin, and from troubling about the dates and respective contributions of J and E and P and D to the Old Testament. It would be enough to say that God revealed Himself in fragments to many an unknown saint and seer, and that, whatever we could not explain or defend, was a partial revelation, given to be afterwards superseded. It proved as time went on that the Prophets became for us the really important part of the Old Testament. They ceased, indeed, in the Higher Critical scheme to be prophets who predicted. They became prophets who preached. They became also more numerous and more fragmentary in their utterances. The two Isaiahs of the earlier days of criticism became four. Zechariahs were multiplied. Even Amos became the work of two authors, and so on. But the prophets had the advantage of freedom from miracles, except, indeed, Daniel, who was relegated to the second century before Christ. The rest, torn and tattered, still figured as preachers mainly of social ethics, while the remainder of the Old Testament gradually lost its venerable antiquity. Even the Decalogue became a product of the latter half of the sixth century. All this mattered little to many, perhaps the majority of clergy and their congregations, so great seemed to be the relief from the burden of Old Testament miracles and morals, and so easily purchased. The revised lectionary, as long as it lasts, will bear the impress of this method of dealing with the documents of the Old Testament.

The lessons are so arranged that it would be possible for a Sunday church-goer, by far the largest class of church-goers, never to hear a chapter of Genesis. Large portions of the Old Testament have, in effect, been withdrawn from public use, and the impression has been left that they are relics of a superseded revelation, with which only the learned need concern themselves. This is on the face of it an unhappy result of the idea of progressive revelation.

That formula is, however, open to far more serious objections. In the first place, a record is not a document that calls for obedience. It arouses interest, satisfies curiosity, but belongs essentially to the past, not to the present. The reader may, no doubt, draw from it conclusions for his own edification. But these will be his own conclusions. They will bind no one but himself. They sin against the maxim that "no prophecy is of private interpretation." A devout reader of this school will tell us what the Old Testament, and each separate book in it, means to himself, that is, what he by prayer and meditation, reads into it. In such exegesis there is abundant profit, and one reader may help another. But it is idle to pretend that my private reflections on words which are attributed to (let us say) the fourth Redactor of Deuteronomy have the same binding effect upon the conscience as the direct revelation given by God to Moses.

The difference in power between a religious record and an authoritative communication is well expressed by Professor Eucken (*Christianity and the New Idealism*, translated by L. J. and W. R. Gibson, pp. 36, 37): "The progress and success of historical criticism sets the problem before us in a very clear

light. This criticsm by a laborious mastering of detail has at length effected a revolution in the whole position. The older faith made a sharp distinction of sacred history from profane, separating the sanctuary from the stir of the market place. That within the sacred precincts action should take a different line, and a supramundane order reveals itself in the working of miracles could hardly excite surprise. . . . The more than earthly majesty with which faith had clothed this sphere was supposed to be a matter of immediate perception. . . . Thus gaps and inconsistencies and contradictions were never noticed. In its unbroken unity it appealed to man's inner nature as whole to whole."

Professor Eucken, of course, regards the old position as lost. But he appreciates the difference between the old and the new, a difference which is often blurred, especially by English commentators of the new school. That which is no more than one of many *histories* of God's self-revelation to man is not in a good position to claim unique authority.

The objection to the formula " record of a progressive revelation " will be still stronger if it appear that the revelation was not progressive, but at critical points distinctly retrogressive. The Old Testament, on its own showing, does indeed present a progressive revelation. We pass from the primitive and markedly anthropomorphic conception of God, so true to the world's childhood that our own children readily embrace it, to the sterner and more remote God of the Wilderness of Sinai, Whose laws cover all details of daily life, and prescribe with exactness the ceremonials of the Sanctuary. Then follows the story of rebellion against God, and of hankering after the gods of surrounding nations,

for which the geographical position of Israel on the highroads of commerce and of war prepares us. These rebellions, condemned in vain by prophetic warnings, lead on to the Exile in Babylon, after which the nation, or rather the remnant of it restored to Palestine, having learnt of the spiritual requirements, without which sacrifice and prayer are mockery, finally is purged from idolatry and is left waiting for the revelation of God in His Son. This was the progressive revelation, as it stood for us in the days before Higher Criticism.

Higher Criticism has complicated this idea of progressive revelation in two ways (1) by a considerable degree of uncertainty as to its own conclusions, and (2) by a reading of the story of revelation which shows it to be at a critical point retrogressive, and not progressive. Since these statements are discordant with the dominant presentation of modern criticism, supported as the writer freely confesses by a weight of learning to which he can lay no claim, it becomes necessary to apologise for a rather lengthy digression. It is due to the reader as well as to the learning of the critics, that such statements should not be made without some attempt to substantiate them.

(1) *The Uncertainty of Higher Criticism as to its own Conclusions.*—It is admitted on all sides that there has been development in the progress of criticism: that, for instance, Wellhausen's conclusions differed considerably from those of Ewald, and that Wellhausen is, on some points, seriously questioned to-day. But that which is not so freely owned is that the whole story of Israel's life and religion has been reconstructed almost entirely out of the Old Testament itself by cross-examination of the evidence that it

supplies. It is not as though discoveries in Egypt, Babylonia and elsewhere had furnished contemporary evidence strong enough to set aside the Hebrew traditions as untrustworthy. Archæology has furnished some evidence, but not all on one side, and no evidence that would by itself justify the entire reconstruction with which we are furnished. The discovery, for instance, of a copy of the Book of Leviticus, of the age of David, while it would not prove the Mosaic authorship of Leviticus, would absolutely disprove the date which Higher Criticism assigns to it. Argument from silence here, inconsistencies there, phraseology in certain places, improbabilities presenting different weight to different minds, have combined—the combination is, of course, most important—to produce the picture which is now presented to us. That picture is of an uncivilised race, believing itself to be in covenant with a God of Whom they knew little except that He was a God of war, gaining a footing in Canaan among a people of higher civilisation, but perhaps of lower morality, then gradually obtaining the upper hand, formed into a kingdom, which soon became two kingdoms, and rapidly deteriorating through wealth and luxury. This people had, for the greater part of its existence before, and under, the monarchy a low form of idolatrous nature-worship of which the national God was professedly the object, but, as little was known about Him, they very easily were tempted to associate with Him the gods of their neighbours. Prophets arose who sternly rebuked their fellow-countrymen, but is not clear why these rebukes were administered, as there was no special reason why Israel should have differed in religion from its neighbours. However, great national reforms under Hezekiah,

followed by a second apostasy, were vigorously renewed under Josiah, and stimulated by the production of a book which, if it was the book of Deuteronomy, professed to be the work of Moses, of whom, so far, the national literature, as we have it, knew nothing. The local idolatrous shrines were destroyed, worship was centralised in Jerusalem, the worship of Jehovah only, and idolatry forbidden. But hardly was the reform effected when disasters overtook Judah—the ten tribes having been already overthrown and their leaders taken into exile by Assyria. The same fate overtook Judah at the hand of Babylonia. During the Exile Ezekiel projected a form of religion based partly on the old Temple worship, but largely the invention of himself and fellow-priests. This form promulgated with the rest of the Pentateuch (dated by the critics two or three centuries earlier) after the Exile became the sacred Law, not only of the Jews, but also of the Samaritans who detested the Jews, and out of it grew the great fabric, not of Judaism only, but also of Christianity. Such a triumph of pseudonymous literature is surely without parallel in the history of the world.

That this story has its own improbabilities is beyond question. Efforts are, of course, made to cover them. It is suggested that Mosaic teaching of a high character survived among the Israelites between the entry into Canaan and the reign of David. But, what it was, or how it was preserved, cannot even be guessed. Sometimes David is credited with religious insight. Sometimes Samuel, and the school of the prophets, figure as exponents of a purer teaching. But in the absence of contemporary documents these suggestions remain guesses. The date of the earliest covenant is a matter

of guess work. So is the date of the Decalogue even in its earliest form. Literary criticism has again and again devoured its own children. While there is substantial agreement among the critics as to the outline of the story, it is an agreement to accept hypotheses. Dr. Kennett, in his article on Israel in *Hastings Encyclopedia of Ethics and Religion*, in the first thirty columns, quite honestly but a little naïvely, 100 times uses such phrases as "perhaps," "possibly," "probably" "not improbably," "may have been," "appears to be," etc., etc. This is not history, and to anchor religion upon so doubtful a record of progressive revelation is surely a hazardous experiment.

(2) *But in any case this story is not a record of progressive revelation.*—For it is an axiom with Higher Criticism that the story of Old Testament religion leads up to the Priestly Code. No doubt the Wisdom literature and most of the Psalms are reckoned to be later. But the Wisdom literature is an outgrowth of contact with Hellenism, and the Psalms, for the most part, a product of the great Maccabean struggle. The law, on the other hand, is the core of Judaism, and the Priestly Code the very shrine of the law. There is set forth the triumph of sacerdotalism over prophecy, the triumph of the letter over the spirit, the work which Christ was to undo. To the Prophets God had been revealed in His glorious Righteousness, insisting on public as well as private conformity to His Will, claiming obedience from His people as a nation in their national life, insisting on obedience of heart and soul, not mere external conformity, disciplining by chastisement, winning to repentance and amendment of life, overflowing with tenderness and readiness to forgive the penitent out of free love, and for His own Name's sake, and protesting against the

externalism of sacrificial cult. The Priestly Code is a retrogression, and return to purely primitive conceptions of sin, of righteousness and of the character of God.

This point is so important that it must be explained with some fulness. The Priestly Code is, of course, not merely a Book of Leviticus, but a complete document interwoven with the rest of the Pentateuch. It has its own story of Creation, of the Flood, of the Covenant with Abraham, of portions of Patriarchal history, of the Exodus and the wanderings, and of ritual, ceremonial and public order. In it, the priests appear as mediators with God and judges between men. Ample provision is made for them by their share in sacrifices, by the tithes, and by the assignment of priestly cities to their use. They give the signal for war, for march from camp to camp, and for halt and rest. To complete the picture —as the critics believe—a purely imaginary Tabernacle is depicted, on which rests the Pillar of Cloud by day and of fire by night. For God is there. There is the Holy of Holies, His earthly dwelling. It is admitted that the book contains archaisms, but as we have it, it is said to be the product of priests working under prophetic influence, and notably of Ezekiel.

It will be seen, from what has already been said, that, at all events from the Christian point of view, if the critics are right in dating the Priestly Code after the Exile, it displays not progress but reaction. A nation sunk in idolatry, with an idolatrous priesthood is roused by the prophets to a knowledge of Jehovah's hatred of the worship that had been offered to Him. "I desire mercy and not sacrifice."—(Hos. vi. 6). "Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto Me."—(Is. i. 13.) "Add your burnt offerings

unto your sacrifices and eat ye flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices."—(Jer. vii. 21, 23.) "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."—(Mic. vi. 8.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) So cried the prophets, and they knew to the full the harm that had been done by the sacrificial cult, *for which, according to the critics, there had been no Divine authority.* Yet these prophets utilised the exile to furbish up the ritual of the King's private chapel—for that is what the Temple is supposed to have been—to impose a most elaborate law of sacrifice, supported by endowments which, if they had been realised, could not have failed to impoverish the little band of exiles: and the Samaritans, without any constraint, followed suit, or, rather, went further, for they accepted the Law but refused to accept the prophets, and, surely, no wonder.

But the Priestly Code is much more than a book of sacrifice. It is a history, as we have already said, a code of law, an ordinance of holy life. In one or two cases the earlier portions of P are so markedly contrasted with the rest of it, that critics have now begun to doubt whether the first chapter of Genesis is really part of P. The same question might be raised about the words, "Enoch walked with God: and he was not, for God took him." —(Gen. v. 24.) Again, the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus is decidedly Deuteronomic. But with these

exceptions P. has characteristics which have apparently escaped the attention of the critics, though they have very important bearing on its date. These characteristics are not mere archaisms such as the *Lex talionis* (an eye for an eye, etc.), the barbarous punishment of burning for certain offences, the law of jealousy, the matter of leprosy in houses and the like. It is credible that priests, who wished men to believe that a book written in the Babylonish exile was really written in the wilderness, should have inserted such archaisms. At the same time, it is not very easy to condone such artifices in the most sacred of all books. What is much more remarkable is that the authors should have consistently throughout the whole work adopted a crude and primitive theology, and have never swerved from it. The Israelite of the Exile could not have failed to think of God as holy, in the sense of possessing and requiring moral and spiritual purity. He must have known God to be a God Who hears prayer. Public worship, public profession of faith had entered into the national life. "My house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples."—(Is. lvi. 7.) Ezekiel fixes the exact spot in the sanctuary where public worship is to be held.—(Ezek. xlvi. 3.) This worship is to be pure spiritual worship. Men are to put away the idols out of their hearts if they approach God.—(Ezek. xiv. 7.) They must draw near with penitence and faith. The just shall live by his faith.—(Hab. ii. 4.) They knew God to be merciful, freely forgiving sin, bestowing a spirit of repentance, giving men a new heart that they might keep His laws. This conception of God was fundamental to the prophets and, presumably, well known to the people.

The compilers of P deliberately and consistently shut their eyes to all this except in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, which contains some moral precepts. Otherwise, the Priestly Code flatly counters all the theological outlook of the age in which it is supposed by the critics to have been written. It is faithfully epitomised in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion."—(Heb. x. 28.) For involuntary transgression, and for a strictly limited number of offences not uncommon in primitive society (see Leviticus vi. 1–8) there was atonement, but pardon is practically unknown to P. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission." —Heb. ix. 22.) Priestcraft is this? At all events, it is very different from all that the prophets had taught—very different from the theology of JE. But if this insistence on sacrifice is priestcraft, what are we to say on the absence of a single provision as to the spiritual condition of the sacrificer? The one allusion to "afflicting the soul" on the day of Atonement is shown by reference to Isaiah lviii. 5 to be compatible with the purest formalism. "Confession" is mentioned four times, but without allusion to "repentance" or "contrition." Of public worship or private prayer there is no mention whatever. The enclosure of the Tabernacle was not large enough to contain a fourth of the Levites as recorded in the book of Numbers. In the whole of P, history, ritual, and law of holiness, there are only three prayers, and those of the very briefest. There is no mention of singers, of psalms, nor of any musical instruments, except trumpets for signal calls. The God of P, as in many primitive theologies, is a terrible God, easily offended and without apparent cause; so terrible that

only one man, once in the year, may approach His inmost shrine, only Aaron and his sons may enter the Holy Place without that srhine. The priests and Levites act as a screen for the people, whose fears are aptly expressed in the words, "Behold we perish, we are undone, we all are undone. Everyone that cometh near unto the Tabernacle of the Lord dieth ; shall we perish all of us ?"—(Numbers xvii. 12, 13.) "Our God is a consuming fire."—(Heb. xii. 29.) So wrote the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, summing up once again in concise words the theology of the Priestly Code. The God of P is indeed concerned with the daily life of the people—their food, their diseases, their marriages, their defilement by blood, by touching a carcase, by entering a leprous house. But of sin, repentance, pardon, restoration, or of any promise of a deliverer, or of a better world He knows nothing. Yet we are asked to believe that the book was written under prophetic influence and auspices. The direct evidence of the book is clean against this hypothetical dating. Dr. Kennett seems to fall back, if we understand him rightly, on the "lying pen of the scribes," on "false prophets," surely very strange media for the communication of a Divine revelation.

All these difficulties disappear if we accept the traditional date of P. It becomes then a record of a religion closely akin to that of Babylonia, and reaching back to a similar antiquity, so far as its theological conceptions are concerned. No doubt other difficulties raised by Higher Criticism remain, and he would be more than bold who insisted that P bore no traces of interpolation and additions. But the main structure would be primitive, used, as it affirms by Moses under Divine

guidance, and corrected so as to be a vehicle of revealed religion suited to a primitive society. On one point P is decisively different from JE. JE. is compatible with a multiplication of altars, P is not. The " consuming fire " must have its one habitation on earth, and its protecting screen of priests and Levites. We thus have two traditions of national worship, the Israelite in JE., the Judahite in P, with Deuteronomy as the mediation between them. That this mediation was unsuccessful, as soon as the personality of Moses was withdrawn and the entry into Canaan begun, is perfectly natural, as is the second attempt at reconciliation under David, and its second failure with the division of the monarchy. That two conflicting faiths may coexist and maintain a warfare of centuries is only too painfully manifest in Ireland. The story of Irish relations with God would differ considerably according to the faith of the writer. The captivity and exile become the occasion for the collection and editing of records, most of which are of the antiquity which tradition assigns to them. The cultus of P becomes the established national religion. We gain in this way a reasonable historical basis for the prophetic denunciation of idolatry and polytheism, a basis wholly lacking in the critical history. The result is the wonderful revelation of God in the Old Testament, given in many forms and parts, but commanding an assent and obedience which is very hard to win for documents which at best are pseudonymous, and may even be the workmanship of false prophets and of lying scribes.

It is not too much to say that Higher Critical History is largely based on three questionable preconceptions. The first is that primitive races have no conception of a

moral Creator and All-Father, and that the idea of one God Who is a Spirit, and supreme in heaven and earth, is gradually evolved out of a combination of lesser gods: that we must have Baals, then Baal-Jehovah, and then Jehovah last of all, Whom we reach partly by prophetic teaching and partly by philosophic reflection. The erroneousness of this conception is exposed by Dr. Andrew Lang in his article on God (*Hastings Encyclopedia*, p. 246b). He there shows that the idea of one All-Father is primitive—illustrating from the Australian aborigines—but apt to dwindle if not kept alive by sacrifice. He adds, "The chief exception, if not the only exception, to this neglect is the case of Israel, whose prophets" (we should add—beginning with Moses) "strenuously kept alive the idea of a supreme Creator, Judge and Father."

A second preconception, highly questionable, is that strongly developed sacerdotalism must of necessity be a late growth in national life. The evidence of Babylonian religion is in the opposite direction. Sacerdotalism was strong in Babylonia long before Moses was born, developed there by Semites, close kinsmen of some, at all events, of the Israelite tribes. When, if ever, the mystery surrounding the word Levite is solved, we shall be in a position to pass an opinion on the development of sacerdotalism in Israel. Meanwhile, the fact remains that by far the most primitive theology in the Bible is found in the Priestly Code, as we now have it.

A third preconception which runs through all Higher Criticism is that of the barbarous and uncivilised condition of Israel, not only on their entrance into Canaan, but Dr. Kennett would tell us, even in the days of Rehoboam, Asa and Jehoshaphat. Our discoveries in Crete and Asia Minor, our knowledge of the high civilisation

of Egypt and Babylonia should make us cautious in assuming the barbaric condition of Israel on the only ground hitherto alleged that of barbaric survivals in their laws. At the time when these pages were written Counsel in England was successfully pleading the laws of Ina on behalf of a client. But our civilisation is not that of Ina the Saxon.

Largely on the basis of these presumptions Israelitish history has been rewritten, and the idea of "a record of progressive revelation" has been framed. It is probable that this century will see it written afresh and on lines more accordant with Biblical tradition. It would be exceedingly rash to make our valuation of the Old Testament rest on any such assumptions.

It has been suggested that the foregoing chapter is open to certain serious objections.

1. "That the old view of the Pentateuch raises far more serious difficulties." It may be freely admitted that the attempt to read the Pentateuch throughout as the original composition of a single author is open to difficulties which are so great that it is no exaggeration to call them insuperable. But that is not the position maintained in this work. It is admitted that the Pentateuch is a composite work, a blending of materials. But the suggestion advanced is that the materials were blended by the author of Deuteronomy, that is, by Moses, and that the history of the nation postulates a solid substratum of really Mosaic literature, or, we should prefer to say, revelation. Room must undoubtedly be left for errors in copying, and for a bringing up to date of matter which had become archaic. But the care

taken to preserve P intact, and manifest refusal of the temptation to harmonise, suggest a sparing use of deliberate alteration.

2. "That as the Old Testament is to be regarded as material for reconstructing history rather than as actual history, uncertainty and probability are inevitable." The suggestion in this book is that the degree of "uncertainty and probability" is so great as to raise grave doubt whether this view of the Old Testament as "material for history" is not wholly unscientific. The validity of a hypothesis depends very much on the degree of certainty to which it leads us.

3. "That the narrowness of P is, after all, only the narrowness of a one-sided development of Jewish religion, and that the element of 'progress' must be sought in the Pentateuch as a whole, and not only in P." The suggestion of the foregoing chapter is that the dominant theological conceptions of P are so much out of harmony with the prophetic theology that it is difficult to conceive of P taking rank as a revelation after the prophetic era.

CHAPTER XII

THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"*The Lord working with them and confirming the word with the signs that followed.*"—St. Mark xvi.

Revelation must be from above—God must speak to man.—The directing Spirit manifested in the Bible as a whole.—Difficulties raised: 1. By inconsistencies, etc., within the Scriptures; 2. By inconsistency with revelation in Nature.—1. The criticisms of the Bible within the Bible: The Bible rather a mine than a store-room; Need of *search* for truth in it confirmed by facts of process of transmission; Criticism welcome: hypotheses based on criticism to be scrutinised.—2. Digression on history of Biblical criticism before examining (2): Begins with circulation of Old Testament among Greeks; Philo and Allegorism; Allegorism used in New Testament references to Old Testament; Alexandria and the four-fold meaning of Scripture; Wyclif and the one meaning—the literal; The Reformation use of Scripture as a means of communion with God; Political use of the Old Testament in Reformation; Hooker on use of Scripture; Reversion in Seventeenth Century to literal verbal accuracy; Criticism of Eighteenth Century hostile and defensive.

Our inquiry, so far, has established the fact of the authority of the Old Testament, not only in the past, but at the present time. In the earlier chapters the corresponding authority of the New Testament was established.

We have seen also that this authority cannot be attributed to the Old Testament as the record of a progressive revelation. Nor can it be called, as has been suggested, a revelation in history. The history, as rewritten by the Critics, is not history, but hypothesis. The story of revelation, as they tell it, is not a story of progression, but culminates in a violent retrogression. But there is a still more serious objection than either of

these. The essence of all revelation, as, indeed, of all religion, is that God should disclose what man cannot find out for himself. As Professor Wallace says (*Essays*, p. 192): "In the very forefront of religion stands the postulated fact of revelation. Man away from God and having lost sight of Him, is constantly persuaded that He is opening a way back to Himself, as it were, giving signals and beckoning from the darkness in which He dwells." But the postulate of the historical method is that religious history is one of many stories of human endeavour, in all of which alike nothing happens which is out of the plane of human experience. A reconstruction of circumstances being given, and a man or men with genius for religious insight and expression added, the story of revelation is before us. What Shakespeare and Dante were to poetry, or Plato and Aristotle to philosophy, that Isaiah and Jeremiah were to religion. All were alike inspired, but the field of inspiration was different. There is no logical limit to this process when once it is adopted. The historical method, in spite of protestations, honestly made, but in fact disregarded, has added Jesus and Paul and John to the list of gifted exponents of religion, and accounts for their respective eminence on its own principles. But it strips them of authority. What has been said by man can be questioned by man. The word of God endureth for ever, but the word of man is as a flower of the field: when the wind goeth over it it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.

The essence of revelation is that God should speak to man, and that man recognising the voice of God should acknowledge that he is bound to obey it. This consciousness the Bible has inspired in mankind more than

any other book for a longer time, and over wider areas. But it has this remarkable peculiarity. It is a literature rather than a book, a Divine library. Centuries divide the first of the writers from the last. Many of the writers enshrined what had been handed down from ages long before that in which they lived. The form in which their message was cast included a wide range of matter relating to things of the earth as well as things of God. They wrote when books were scarce, most of them without knowledge of what the others had written, or access thereto. That the result should show a marvellous harmony respecting the things of God points to the Presence of One guiding and directing Spirit, and this is the secret of the authority of the Bible—its witness as a whole concerning God, and the character of that witness. But concerning the interpretation of other parts of the message questions have arisen which must here be considered.

These questions may for convenience be classified under two heads, viz. :—

(1) Questions arising from apparent inconsistencies, inaccuracies and defects within the Scriptures themselves, and

(2) apparent contradictions between the revelation of God in Scripture and the revelation of God in Nature.

On each of these two points something must be said, not because anyone can hope at this stage to say anything new, or even to put old matter in such form as to be universally convincing. That were a hopeless task. But in the clash and confusion of opinions it seems to be the duty of those with whom responsibility lies, frankly to bring, each of them his own contribution, in

the hope of helping some, though they cannot help all. It seems to be a duty also to put in a plea with controversialists on either side to refrain from low and mean opinions of those from whom they differ, for the wrath of man obscures all vision of the truth of God.

(1) To deal then first with the apparent inconsistencies, inaccuracies and defects within the Scriptures. From the days of Bishop Colenso onwards abundant instances of these have been brought into view by Higher Criticism in England. Arithmetical calculations have been made disproving the statements in the Pentateuch: contradictions of laws within the Pentateuch itself, variations between the Pentateuch and the historical books, variations, within the books of Samuel, between the books of Joshua and Judges, between the books of Kings and Chronicles, moral defects in Bible characters, in Abraham, Jacob, Jael, Samson, David, Elisha, and in the so-called imprecatory Psalms. In the New Testament also have been found inconsistencies in the Synoptic Gospels, between them and the Gospel according to S. John, and in the stories of the Resurrection. Even against our Lord have been quoted His denunciation of the Pharisees and His cursing of the fig tree. S. Paul has been represented as founder of Christianity because of the plain worship of Christ as God, to which his letters bear witness. The tale is endless. It is the very staple of a vast literature proceeding, not as of old, from disbelievers in God and in all religion, but from Professors of Theology, Divines and dignitaries of the Church, from Theological Colleges of Presbyterians and Nonconformists, from the United States and Canada, as well as from Holland, France and Germany. Even the Church of Rome has not wholly escaped the critical

tendency. A detailed treatment of the questions raised is manifestly impossible, nor is it necessary, if any guiding principle or principles can be found.

First, it should be noted that there is a long history behind these questions. An outline of it will be more conveniently placed under our second heading—apparent contradictions with the revelation of God in Nature. But the fact that Biblical criticism is almost as old as the Bible itself has its own encouraging aspect. There is that in the Bible which makes it stronger than all that men have said against it. We may go further. Biblical criticism has been incorporated within the Bible. The Book of Ecclesiastes challenges the whole idea that there is a world to come, or that there is any end worth living for but sensual enjoyment. The Book of Job criticises the teaching that suffering is a mark of Divine displeasure against sin. The Prophets criticise the idea of sacrifice. S. James appears at least to criticise S. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. Our Lord's criticism of the Mosaic law is notorious, but it stands on a different footing on account of His Personality. These instances are sufficient to show that there is a legitimate criticism of the text of the Bible, and they supply us with a principle, viz.: that spiritual truth has to be sought, and sought with diligence. Even those who stumble on it, as it were accidentally, must read the Parable of the Treasure Trove (S. Matt. xiii. 44), and take the warning that the Treasure finder has "to hide his treasure and purchase the field"; he must make it his own by a costly process. But the general rule is wonderfully illustrated by the twenty-eighth chapter of Job, which ends with the words: "The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

This axiom is prefaced by the miner's search for gold, the shafts that have to be sunk, the descent "hanging in the air and swinging to and fro," the dangers of the flooded mine, and other perils of the quest. Even in the Bible itself spiritual truth must be sought. Honest and reverent criticism must be welcomed, even when it gives us the pain of unsettling what we believed to have been settled long ago.

The necessity for diligent search is confirmed by the fact that the Bible has not been transmitted to us by any mechanical process. There is a story that the seventy translators of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek, being shut up in seventy different cells, all produced a translation in identical words. The story is a pure fiction. No doubt a miraculously preserved text would have saved us from many troubles. But we have not a miraculously preserved text. The Greek translation proves abundantly that there were other Hebrew texts than that from which our Bible is taken, and our Bible text is in some places so corrupt as to be untranslateable. We must allow for textual errors, for revisions, for insertions, for numerical miscalculations, and, the present writer would add, for a sharp distinction in the religious practices of the Joseph and Judah tribes, which cleavage it was a special aim of Mosaic legislation to heal; but the healing was never effected, as the rival temples of Zion and Gerizim in our Lord's time witnessed. A clear distinction is to be drawn between facts brought to light by criticism and critical conclusions. No facts bearing on Scripture can, in the end, do anything but service to Scripture. It is the instinct of a discoverer of facts to frame a hypothesis, an instinct that needs to be severely subjected to examination. It is hard not

to be impatient, not to question facts because we dislike the inferences drawn from them, but it is in the exercise of patience that true faith is tested. How these questions affect the value and authority of the Bible for the young and unlearned is a matter of no small importance, which must be examined presently. But, so far as we have gone, we may say that the increased study of the Bible from a critical point of view impresses, on those who would use it devotionally, the need of pains and patience.

(2) By far the more serious questions about the Old Testament and the New centre round the supposed conflict between Revelation and Science. This is no new conflict, and even a cursory review of its history may be useful at this stage of our inquiry.

The difficulties presented by Old Testament cosmogony and miracles, and, we may add, at certain points by Old Testament ethics, presented themselves as soon as relations began to be established between Judaism and Hellenism. The high morality, the religious power of the Old Testament were quickly recognised by the Greeks. The contrast with Greek mythology was obvious and painful. But Greek philosophy stumbled at the " signs," the miracles that were so dear to the Jewish mind. The Jews valued them as tokens of God's special favour to His people. For this very reason, and from the habit of mind gendered by Platonic and Aristotelian teaching, that which was so precious to the Jew was suspected, even disliked, by the Greek. The great Jewish philosopher Philo, a contemporary of our Lord, attempted to reconcile Jewish religion with Greek reason by proving that all that was true in Plato and Aristotle was to be found in Moses. For this purpose he fell back

upon the process, already familiar to his countrymen, of allegorising the Old Testament, a process by which the Old Testament could be made to mean anything. There could be no more marked contrast than is to be found in the treatment of the Old Testament by our Lord and by Philo. It may be said that Jesus confined His ministry to the Jews, and never was confronted, so far as we know, with Hellenic disputations. This is perfectly true, but the fact remains that He did not allegorise. Nevertheless His use of "the sign of the prophet Jonah," His discourse on "the true Bread that came down from Heaven," His saying, "he that believeth on Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," were all in the direction of allegory. They assigned a spiritual meaning *in addition* to the literal, but not as complete allegory does—instead of the literal. In S. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, the tendency to allegorise is found, though it is carefully restrained. He admits that his treatment of Sarah and Hagar is allegorical. So, assuredly, is his mention of the "spiritual rock which followed them, which rock was Christ." But S. Paul's allegories did not go far, if at all, beyond those of Jesus Christ. In the very difficult and dangerous transition period that followed the death of the Apostles and the fall of Jerusalem, the Old Testament became most precious to the Church as the great bulwark of monotheism, the one sure barrier that defended it against Gnostic speculation. The literal was preferred to the fanciful meaning. But the conflict with Greek philosophy in Alexandria revived allegorical interpretations. Clement and Origen allegorised freely. By this time "allegorism was regarded by all as one of the articles of the Ecclesiastical

Canon or Tradition" (Bigg, *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 56). A reaction towards literalism set in with the strong sacerdotal current, which is manifest in the third century. The Temple Priesthood and ritual were freely used in defence of this tendency and, strangely enough, even the use of images was defended from the Old Testament.

It would be interesting, did time permit, to dwell on Augustine's treatment of Scripture, so singularly akin in many respects to that of the Reformers of the sixteenth century. There is the same boldness in setting the matter above the letter, and yet the same strong sense that every text contains an absolute Divine command, with all the consequent belief in absolute inerrancy. But the fourfold method of interpretation, the literal, the allegorical, the anagogical, and the mystical, remained and held the field. With the overthrow of Roman civilisation it was not unnatural that the secret of interpreting Scripture became the property of the learned few, and, in time, this interpretation came to be regarded as of equal weight and authority with Scripture itself. To trust the Scriptures to the unlearned laity was considered dangerous in the last degree, since they would fall into the snare of interpreting them literally. In opposition to this Wyclif maintained "that the whole of Scripture is of equal authority as regards every part of it. Wherefore it is plain that Scripture is the one and only Word of God, and its authors are only scribes or heralds of God to write out His law, as He dictates it to them, and are not authors except in an equivocal sense in comparison with Him." In this way Wyclif sought to counter the authority of

ecclesiastical tradition, and to open the Bible once more to the unlearned laity.

The fifteenth century was an age of Bible translation all over Europe, but chiefly for the benefit of the cultured or for monastic use. In England, however, the Lollards continued the struggle to bring the English Bible into the hands and homes of the English people. The result of this movement was to stress the spiritual value of the Bible and its authority as a personal rule of life and means of communion with God. In the quotation from Lindsay's *History of the Reformation* at the end of this chapter the position of the sixteenth century Reformers is fully stated. It will be seen, on perusal of it, that this personal use of the Bible overshadowed the doctrinal use on which Wyclif had so strongly insisted. In one sense Wyclif had seen further into the consequences of his movement than the Reformers of the sixteenth century at first were able to see. Wyclif saw that the whole State system and culture of Western Europe was intimately connected with its Church system. One could not be overthrown without overthrowing the other. A fresh foundation had to be discovered for the political world, and where was it to be found except in the Bible ? But this meant the use of the Bible for other purposes than that of communion with God. This secular use, if we may so call it, led to assertion of its infallibility for all uses and all purposes. It led also to a sharp challenge of this claim. Out of this controversy grew Hooker's epoch-making work, *The Ecclesiastical Polity*.

Hooker's two main contentions are (1) that while Scripture teaches all things that are necessary to salvation, and teaches them infallibly, there are many things

not necessary to salvation, which God has left to us to discover by other means. Thus, in reply to Cartwright's argument from Proverbs ii. 9, "Wisdom doth teach every good way," Hooker writes: "Yes, every good way, but not by one way of teaching. Whatsoever men on earth or angels in Heaven do know it is but a drop out of that unemptiable fountain. . . . Some things she openeth by the sacred books of Scripture: some things by the glorious works of Nature: with some things she inspireth men from above with spiritual influence: in some things she leadeth and traineth them only by worldly experience and practice."—(Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Keble's Editon, Vol. I., p. 287.) English theology, so far as it is guided by Hooker, leaves to experience and observation the whole world that can be so approached. Hooker's work was almost exactly contemporary with Bacon's *Novum Organum*. The same sublime conception of Divine Law to be discovered by study of the works of God lay behind both. (2) Hooker's second great principle to use his own words was this: "It is not to be required nor can be exacted at our hands that we should yield unto anything other assent than such as doth answer the evidence, which is to be had of that we assent unto."—(Vol. I., p. 323.) In other words, even the statements of Scripture in matters not necessary to salvation are subject to the ordinary laws of evidence. Hooker goes so far as to say explicitly that we may doubt concerning the fall of men and of angels, and also of the Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary after, though not before, the Birth of our Lord. It is true that Hooker also maintains that "God Himself cannot possibly err nor lead into error. For this cause His testimonies are always truth and most

infallible certainty." But he goes on to add—he is at the time speaking of God's commandments: "the end being known whereunto He directeth His speech, the argument even negatively is ever more strong and forcible concerning those things that are apparently requisite unto the same end." Thus the infallibility and certainty are limited to the purpose with which the commandment is given.

The unhappy controversies of the Stuart period deflected English theology from the high level to which Hooker had raised it. Protestant theologians were embarrassed also, as Wyclif had been embarrassed, by the Roman Catholic contention that Scripture has more than one meaning. Waterland, in his *Scripture Vindicated*, falls back on literal verbal accuracy. The same position was taken up by a far greater man, Blaise Pascal, who unhesitatingly defends the historicity of the whole of the Old Testament, and even goes so far as to say in his *Pensées*, "As creation became more remote God provided a contemporary historian, and charged a a whole people with care of the book, in order that it might be the most authentic history in the whole world, and that all men might know a thing so necessary to be known, which could not otherwise have been known." Pascal was, of course, a great opponent of the Jesuits,[1] and his attitude to Scripture may have been influenced in part by his opposition to them. But he was also the strenuous opponent of the mechanical philosophy of his day. His great object was to fight against the exclusion of the spiritual from human life, and he was perfectly

[1] Richard Simon, a pioneer of Higher Criticism, profoundly modified the idea of inspiration. He was allied with the Jesuits in their controversies with Pascal and with the Protestants. (Sabatier: *Religion of Authority*, etc., p. 195.)

conscious, while he defended literalism in the interpretation of Scripture, that literalism has its dangers also. "Holy Scripture," he says, "is not a science of the mind, but of the heart. It is intelligible only to those whose heart is right. The veil, which is over the Scripture for the Jews, is over it for Christians also. Love is not only the end of Holy Scripture; it is the door also."

At this point this review may be closed. With the eighteenth century Biblical Criticism was busily at work, sometimes out of sheer hostility to Christianity, but sometimes in the endeavour to find a sound basis, as against the rationalists. The purpose of introducing this brief account of Biblical criticism here has been to show that the difficulties of the present age are no new difficulties, and that certain lines of solution, which appear to be promising, raise new obstacles quite as serious as those which they were designed to allay. Especially is this true of the method of allegory.

Lindsay's "History of the Reformation."

Vol. 1. 453. (To the Reformers) the Scriptures were a personal rather than a dogmatic revelation. They record the experience of a fellowship with God enjoyed by His Saints in past ages, which may still be shared by the faithful. In Bible history, as the Reformers conceived it, we hear two voices, the voice of God speaking love to man, and the voice of the renewed man answering in faith to God.

The Protestants did not mean by infallibility what the Roman Catholics meant. The Romanists, as much as the Protestants, based their whole system on Scripture. But the Roman Catholics found that the Protestants

had a conception of the *unity* of Scripture which upset their interpretation. The Roman Catholics had therefore to create an artificial unity by means of the doctrine of the Church, so as to use the Bible "as a storehouse of divinely communicated knowledge of doctrinal truths and rules for moral conduct—and nothing more. The Protestants found in it a new home for a new life, not merely knowledge about God but communion with Him.

The medieval student by Origen's fourfold method had practically destroyed the value of the Bible from which he could draw any meaning that he pleased. But, on the other hand, faith being assent to doctrinal positions, he was really tied up to meanings imposed by the Church. Infallibility guaranteed correctness of propositions stating relations between God and man, with the result that the use of the Bible as a means of communion between God and the plain believer was destroyed.

With the Protestants saving faith was not assent to propositions, but trust in the promises of God, and this trust could be drawn from, and strengthened by, ordinary reading of the Bible, even though parts seemed to be useless or unintelligible. For them it was God speaking to man, therefore they hastened to translate it.

For the Roman Catholics Jesus was revealer of truths concerning God, for the Protestants He was God manifesting Himself as very God, and the stories of patriarchs, etc., were records of how God dealt with the Fathers and promises that He will so deal with us.

Consequently the authority and infallibility of the Bible lay in its presenting or containing the Word of God to be apprehended by faith, the Holy Spirit carrying conviction of its authority. Luther held that the Word

of God was presented more directly and convincingly in some parts of the Bible than in others, "the Gospel of God promised by the Prophets in the Scriptures." Calvin speaks of the word "as the spiritual gate by which we enter into the heavenly Kingdom." So Zwingli: "It is the sum of God's commands, threatenings and promises, contained in the Scriptures."

On the other hand, the Protestants do not mean that one part of the Bible is the word of God and another is not, but when they say that the Bible is the Word of God, and they do say that, they mean that it contains, presents, conveys, records the Word. The authority and infallibility attach primarily to the Word of God, secondarily to the Scriptures. No authority nor infallibility attach to the Scriptures, which are otherwise apprehended than by faith. Neither inerrancy nor correctness of abstract propositions are apprehended by faith: they are matters of fact to be accepted or rejected by men's ordinary faculties. Thus Calvin says in his *Institutes*: "Let it be considered as an undeniable truth that they who have been inwardly taught of the Spirit feel an entire acquiescence in Scripture, and that it is self-authenticated, carrying with it its own evidence, and ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and arguments from reason: but that it obtains the credit which it deserves with us by the testimony of the Spirit."—(*Inst.*, I., vii. 5.)

If every part of Scripture is divine, every part is also human. The supernatural is encased in human realities. To apprehend the former, faith illumined by the Holy Spirit is necessary; but it is sufficient to use the ordinary methods of research to learn the credibility of the history in Scripture. Luther says of Genesis: "What though

Moses never wrote it?" He thought the books of Kings more worthy of credit than the books of Chronicles.

But while the Bible is human literature it is the record of the revelation of God, and has been carefully guarded and protected by God. This idea for ever forbids careless or irreverent criticism.

CHAPTER XIII

THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—(*continued*)

"*Revelation in the Bible and in Nature.*"

Foundation principles of just criticism reviewed.—Bible a mediated revelation.—What does "Thus saith the Lord" mean?—Communication under limitation imposed by recipients.—2. *Bible and Revelation in Nature*: Nature means our impressions received through senses.—A Greek, not a Hebrew, conception.—God might have used language consistent with correct understanding of impressions.—But in fact the language is consistent with impressions of the age.—Instances (1) of Galileo; (2) Of Darwinism.—The science of the Bible true for its day.—Its authority is its witness of God to our spirits.—Probably the Genesis stories far older than Moses.—The inspiration goes back to those whom God first taught by this means.—The character attributed to God in the Old Testament.—*The Miracles of the Bible.*—What is a miracle?—Three elements: (*a*) Experience novel; (*b*) Record trustworthy; (*c*) Divine purpose.—(*a*) How distinguish miracle from Providential interposition.—Illustration from James Paton.—If we knew *all* conditions, all miracles might prove to be natural; (*b*) Biblical criticism—its effect upon evidence; (*c*) Our Lord's attitude to Old Testament Miracles—does not involve disbelief in their occurrence:—the spiritual is more than the intellectual—a point overlooked by Higher Criticism as well as by conservatives.—Spiritual Triumphs of the uncriticised Bible.—We want not Hebrew religion but the witness of the Old Testament to the Christ of God.

Our review of the history of Biblical criticism has shown us:

(1) That it is as old as the Bible itself.

(2) That it became acute as soon as the Old Testament was presented to the Gentile world.

(3) That allegorical interpretation did not explain the difficulties, but made the Bible useless to all who had not the allegorical key.

(4) That the Reformers aimed at using the Bible as a means of communion with God, but believed

themselves forced to defend its literal inerrancy, not only, or evenly mainly, as an alternative to Papal infallibility, but as a justification for giving the unlearned the Bible in their own tongue.

On the other hand, since the miraculous transmission of the text of the Bible, and an equally miraculous accuracy of translation into all tongues, are not seriously maintained by any thoughtful person, it will be freely granted that all criticism which restores the accuracy of the text, which helps us to a more faithful translation, which draws attention to apparent inconsistencies or even defects, is to be welcomed by devout Bible students —welcomed even if it robs them of some passage, or explanation of a passage, which had been dear to them— welcomed even if it makes the study of the text more difficult, and raises doubts for which there is no present solution. The Bible is a gold mine, not a gold store-room. Or, if we may change the metaphor, it has some resemblance to the manna in the wilderness. So long as each devout soul uses the capacity which God has given him, it will be found that he who can only gather a little will have enough, and he who can gather more will have no superfluity. The faulty translation of a few texts by a missionary still stumbling over linguistic difficulties may suffice to save a soul as precious in the sight of God as the soul of an Origen, an Augustine, a Richard Hooker, or a Pascal. It is no condition of entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven that examination papers on the Bible should be answered, and it is as true now as in the days of the Psalmist that "the opening of Thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple."—(Ps. cxix. 130.) We have here foundation

principles which may help us in the more serious questions that are still before us.

These foundation principles are worth careful scrutiny. They amount in fact to this—that the revelation of God in the Bible is not immediate, but mediate. An immediate revelation would be one in which no sort of means was used by God, His Spirit communicating directly with the spirit of man without the medium of speech, hearing, or sensation of any sort. That is not the method of Divine revelation as we have it in the Bible. It is in fact the very opposite. Immediate revelation would be a separate revelation to each spirit of man, separate and incommunicable, for communication implies speech or writing. The result of such revelation would be to isolate all members of the human race from one another in that very sphere which is most essential to all. No religion could grow out of it, for religion is the binding together of men in the service of God.

It is manifest, therefore, that the revelation of God in the Bible is a revelation through a medium. Such revelation may, and does, result in direct communication between God and the soul. God speaks and man answers. We have here, in its truest sense, the Word of God. But it is a mistake, and a very serious mistake, to confuse the means with the result: to confuse the Bible with that direct communication which results from right use of the Bible.

But, it may be objected that we have, in the Bible, constant use of such terms as these: "The Word of the Lord came unto me saying"[1]: "The Lord spake unto

[1] NOTE.—(Extract from Sanday and Headlam on *Romans*, p. 42): "Luther, Table Talk Aph: clxlix. Melanchthon discoursing with Luther touching the prophets, who continually

Moses saying" : We have in the New Testament the very words of Christ Himself. It may be asked whether these are not direct and immediate communications from God. The answer must be that they are not. For speech is a medium, a medium which may be misunderstood. Speech must be accommodated (1) to the language, (2) to the mentality, of the hearer. In the case of our Blessed Lord, His words were spoken in Aramaic, translated into Greek, passed through processes of copying, and again translated into English. They were also addressed to Jews in a particular age, and adapted to the mental outlook and circumstances of the age. They pass through many media before they reach our spirit, and set up there an immediate communication between God and ourselves. What is true of our Lord's words is far more true of words of God recorded in the Old Testament : " God said unto Abraham, take thy son, and offer him up for a burnt offering." —(Gen. xxii. 2.) Could any such words have the character of a direct communication from the eternal God, the character of a full revelation of the will of God, touching the dealing of a father with his son ? We must read into them circumstances and conditions of a special age, *media* which qualify the character of the command.

These considerations make it clear that any revelation of God, which is to bind men together, must be subject to certain limitations, of which the chief are

boast thus : ' Thus saith the Lord,' asked whether God in person spoke with them or no. Luther replied : ' They were holy and very spiritual people, who seriously contemplated upon holy and divine things ; therefore God spake with them in their consciences, which the prophets held as sure and certain revelations.' "

Perhaps we should say consciousness rather than consciences.

time, with the changing conditions of our race, speech as the imperfect vehicle of thought, memory until writing begins, and then the perils of MSS. and printing, and last, but far from least, our own limited powers of comprehension. Our very reverence for the Bible, through which God has made Himself known to us, must restrain us from attributing to it the character which belongs to God alone, that is, infallibility. An infallible book would need infallible and ominscient men to understand and to interpret it. It would not help us to communion with God, but would stand between God and man, a rival in the natural world to God Himself, a veritable Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil.

Before examining the character of the revelation of God in the Bible it will be useful to consider the revelation of God in Nature, first asking ourselves what we mean by the word "Nature." It is not to be found in the Old Testament. If the Psalmist wished to contrast the revelation of God in the Law with that which is found in created objects, he did not say: "Nature declares the glory of God," or "When I consider the works of Nature," but "the Heavens declare the glory of God."—(Ps. xix. 1.) "When I consider the work of Thy fingers."—(Ps. viii. 3.) To the devout Hebrew the external world was the work of God. It was in no sense a rival to Him. It was Greek philosophy which attributed to the impressions of our senses a being independent of God and of ourselves. For as Greek philosophy moved towards the thought of one God, it banished that God into a far-off activity, in which He was engaged in self-contemplation, and confronted man with a world that was too strong for him. This abstraction, this figment of Greek imagination, has passed from Philo-

sophy into popular science. To this very day men speak of Nature as doing this or that, as compelling them to do this or that, of Nature as imposing laws of her own upon the universe. At other times men speak of Nature as a machine working on, according to a design once for all imprinted on it. Out of such ideas springs the supposed contrast between the revelation of God in the Bible and in Nature, and of opposition between the Bible and science.

Now the truth is that "Nature" is nothing more than our impression of the reports of our senses, and of our conclusions from those reports. We imagine that our senses do not deceive us: "What am I to believe if I cannot trust my own senses?" In fact, they do deceive us, and deceive us grossly. The story of man on earth is largely the story of correction of false impressions, false conclusions, through which he gropes his way towards a better understanding of the totality of all that is outside himself, yes, and towards a better understanding of the relation between himself and the bodily frame in which he exists.

It is not uncommon to read and hear arguments concerning Revelation based on the character and nature of God. "God is perfect"; "God cannot lie." "Therefore whatever is contained in a Divine revelation must be absolutely true, however great be the contradiction between the contents of revelation and the impressions of our senses." In a certain sense such arguments are sound. As Hooker says: "God cannot err, nor lead into error. For this cause His testimonies, whatever He affirmeth, are always truth and most infallible certainty." But we have also seen that He uses the media of human thought and speech as means of

conveying His revelation, and these are liable to error. It is conceivable that God should have presented to human intelligence, in language, information as to external objects, which information was wholly inconsistent with what their senses seemed to report: conceivable that God should have guarded this language and the transmission of it to us from any sort of error. But there is no obvious reason why this should have been done unless His self-revelation was to be contained in an infallible book, covering much matter besides that self-revelation. All this we repeat is conceivable. But those who regard the Bible as essentially the true self-revelation of God in book-form should ask themselves not only what God might have done, but what has He actually done? Now this is a matter that can be historically tested.

Of all the things that our senses seem to tell us, nothing is more obvious than that the earth is a horizontal plane, over which the heavens are arched like a dome, and that the sun, moon, and stars in that dome are there for the purpose of giving light to the world.

> "The spacious firmament on high,
> With all the blue ethereal sky
> And spangled heavens, a shining frame
> Their great Original proclaim.
> . . . . .
> What though in solemn silence all
> Move round this dark terrestrial ball."

So sung Addison a century after the discoveries of Galileo and his successors had proved that the sun, moon and stars did not move round the earth, and that "the spacious firmament" was as much spread below as above, and was not "a frame," but illimitable space. The apparent evidence of our senses makes it possible for us to sing:—

"And when on joyful wing, cleaving the sky
Sun, moon and stars forgot, upwards I fly."

Yet we know all the time that the truest evidence of our senses contradicts all these appearances, and that any account of Creation which was true to fact must have done violence to the very most elementary, as it seems, of all facts, that the earth is the centre of Creation. To get over this difficulty it is sometimes affirmed now that the astronomy of the Bible is consistent with the Copernican—that the Bible speaks of "the round world," that "the sun going forth to the uttermost end of the earth" is a figure of speech, that "Joshua's command to the sun to stand still" was a poetic description of long protracted visibility. But all these attempts to square Biblical with Copernican astronomy are untrue to plain history. Galileo's discoveries were, in fact, regarded as blasphemous heresies. He had to recant them. His belief in limitless space containing an infinity of worlds like our own cost Giordano Bruno his life as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century. There was no question then that the old astronomy had behind it the authority of the Bible as well as of the senses. The new astronomy was not only absurd; it was far worse: it was heretical.

We now are conscious that, in truth it was His good pleasure, Who gave us the revelation of Himself in the Bible, to use as His medium the conceptions of the world current among those to whom He unfolded the sublime truths concerning Himself, that are conveyed in the first chapter of Genesis and elsewhere. It is difficult to see in what other way an intelligible revelation could have been conveyed to men of old times. To them a revelation in terms of Copernican astronomy would have been an absurdity.

We have then in the Copernican Astronomy, as compared with the Biblical, sufficient evidence that the Divine revelation did not include revelation concerning important matters on which the sense interpretations of ordinary men are incorrect. It was no part of the plan of Old Testament revelation to correct those impressions. For the purpose of our argument it is not really necessary to pursue the matter further. If the Bible is a true revelation, though its astronomy is incorrect, its spiritual truths and spiritual authority are equally unaffected by its cosmogony. But a fuller treatment of this point is likely to be demanded because the relations between God and man are more closely involved in cosmogony than in astronomy. There is no doubt that Darwin's *Origin of Species* was an epoch-making book theologically as well as scientifically. It was received with a torrent of ecclesiastical denunciation. Its author would undoubtedly have had to choose between the stake and recantation had he lived three or four centuries earlier.

The grounds for this religious antagonism were manifold. A few of them may be mentioned summarily. (1) The principal argument for the existence of a Creator had been the evidence of design in creation. Evolution by natural selection seemed to dispose of the necessity for a Divine adapter and designer. (2) The time required for evolution of species was wholly inconsistent with Biblical chronology. Here Darwin's theory supported doubts that had been raised by geology. (3) The theologically important doctrine of the *Fall of Man* seemed to be cut up by the roots. Where the Bible spoke of a Fall, nature seemed to speak of the Ascent of Man. Sin, so far as room was left for it at all, appeared

to be the slough of animal origin, from which man was escaping. (4) The reason for Sabbath observance embedded in the fourth commandment seemed no longer to hold good. These instances are sufficient to show the intensely practical nature of what may be called the Darwinian attack on current theology, though it was no part of Darwin's purpose to raise theological controversy. The Copernican astronomy could in a certain sense be neglected. Astronomers are few, and their studies, especially in our cloudy skies, quite out of popular ken. For the public generally the sun continued to rise and set for the benefit of man, the starry heavens continued to be identified with the Heaven of God. But it was not so easy to dismiss the question, "Am I descended from 'Adam the son of God' (S. Luke iii. 38), or am I the product of natural selection from an enormously remote pair of baboons?"

It is premature, probably, at this stage, and certainly no part of the design of this book to effect a reconciliation between Genesis and Darwinism. The most that can be attempted here is to state the conclusions which have been reached by the writer, who remembers well the original bitterness of it, and some, at all events, of the solutions that have been attempted.

(1) The attempt to explain the world apart from God, as a mere series of happenings is really intellectual suicide. It is the attempt to give a reasoned account of things, apart from Him Who is the only sufficient ground for believing that reason can explain them, or that they have any existence outside the mind of man.

(2) The attempt to explain the relations between God and man, apart from human self-will acting in known opposition to God, is not true to the conscious-

ness of human personality, and, logically reasoned out, ends in oppression and tyranny.

(3) The solidarity of mankind in alienation from God points to some common departure from a conception of man and of his destiny which was wholly good, and that departure made room for an act of redemptive love.

(4) The early chapters of Genesis do very truly present these truths in a form adapted to primitive understanding, and, if we could penetrate the depths which they cover, would be found consistent with highest philosophy and the most exact science.

Some help in this direction is afforded Bishop Berkeley's *Third Dialogue between Hylas and Philonous*. Bishop Berkeley, it will be remembered, held that "things perceived by the sense are immediately perceived, and things immediately perceived are ideas, and ideas cannot exist without the mind; their existence, therefore, consists in their being perceived." The challenger asks Philonous (*i.e.*, Berkeley) to explain how he reconciles his doctrines with the Mosaic account of creation. The answer is given as follows :—

"Imagine that, if I had been present at the Creation, I should have seen things produced into being: that is, become perceptible in the order prescribed by the sacred historian. I ever believed the Mosaic account of creation, and now find no alteration in my manner of believing it. When things are said to begin or end their existence, we do not mean this with regard to God, but His creatures. All objects are externally known by God, or, which is the same thing, have an eternal existence in His Mind; but, when things imperceptible before to creatures are by a decree of God perceptible to them, then they are said to begin a relative existence,

with respect to created minds. Upon reading, therefore, the Mosaic account of creation, I understand that several parts of the world became gradually perceptible to finite spirits, endowed with proper faculties, so that, whoever such were present, they were in truth perceived by them. This is the literal obvious sense suggested to me by the words of the Holy Scriptures." Berkeley includes under finite being finite spirits other than man (*Berkeley Works in One Volume*, 1837, p. 77.)

From this point of view the first chapter of Genesis may be read as a revelation of the mind of God in the order of days, whether of 24 hours or not. That the writer of the chapter so understood what he wrote does not follow, nor are all difficulties removed by the suggestion. But it has remarkable affinities with some of the philosophic thought of to-day. For instance, Hardwick in his book, *Religion and Science*, writes (p. 122): "Idealism, it will be remembered, seeks to interpret reality in terms of mind or spirit. And it does this in certain cases—notably in the case of F. H. Bradley, by regarding all *phenomena* as forms or aspects of the absolute mind or spirit." Berkeley's idealism takes what many will feel to be the safer line of regarding phenomena as manifestations of Divine thought to finite comprehensions.

But we are straying far from our province. For the purpose before us it is enough that the form in which the origins of man are presented to us in the Bible, are such expressions of Divine truth as would be intelligible to the world that first received them. We can believe it to be in its literal form inspired truth coming down to us from an age that was only beginning to grapple with the problems of life, inadequately equipped with information through

the senses, or with means to test that information. For us the God-given truths that declare the relation of God to man remain unchanged, as those relations are unchanged. But we imperil the acceptance of those truths, if we put them into conflict with facts, which are truly thoughts of God expressed in things visible. The thoughts of God, and their expression to us, cannot be self-contradictory.

Many with whom the writer has real sympathy, find a difficulty in admitting that a revelation of God can contain any erroneous statement. Nor are they satisfied by the suggestion that we must distinguish the revelation of God in the Bible from the rest of its contents. How can a line be drawn, they ask, between the words : " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and the remaining statements in the same chapter ? What, if they accept it for themselves, of the uneducated, the children, the heathen to whom they go with this book ? What are they to say when they are asked : " Is this really all true ? " To this question there can be only one honest answer : " This book is not written or dictated by God. It is written by men who believed that what they wrote was true. They made mistakes about some things. But about one thing they made no mistake. They believed that God was using them to deliver a message to us about Himself. The message is there, and all God's children find it. Let us pray to Him that we may so use this book that we shall hear the message too."

The central error which must, at any cost, be banished, is that of speaking of the Bible as a revelation, whereas it is, and always has been, the *medium* of a revelation. We do not really honour God by making Him responsible

either for the science or for the statements of fact contained in the Bible. The science was honest science in its day. The facts were honestly recorded. But the science and record were the science and record of fallible men. Correct science and correct history will save no man. Incorrect science and incorrect history will damn no man. But wilful blindness to truth is damning, for it is a dishonour to Christ, Who is the Truth. On the other hand, what we have in the Bible is not a mere record of what men thought or said of the world or of God. No, it is not even the record of a revelation. It is the witness of the Spirit to men of old concerning God, as they could receive it. It is interpreted to us by the same Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. Hence its authority and power. We honour God most, we show most reverence to the Bible, when we so treat it.

Our false ideas about the Bible go back to the age when books were scarce, so scarce that the Scriptures could hardly be handled. It was not strange that the book should then be confused with its message: not strange that the confusion should be considered a mark of reverence, whereas it was a dishonour to the message. Especially is this true of the book Genesis, which serves admirably as an illustration of conceptions, imported from our ideas of sitting down to write a book. The only evidence which we have as to the composition of the book Genesis is that which the book itself supplies, together with that which can be gathered from the books of other nations. The Bible, even the oldest part of it, if we start from the date of Moses, is now known to be not the oldest book in the world. We can compare and contrast it with books that are older by far than the age of Moses. We find ourselves in a world of races kindred to the Hebrews,

some of them close kinsmen. We know what their stories of the old world were. We can see plainly how it pleased the Holy Spirit to make use of those stories, stories that Abraham told to Isaac, stories which generations of ancestors had handed down to Abraham. The antiquity of the Bible becomes, in fact, far more remote. At what point the Holy Spirit was first pleased to enlighten the teller of those stories with pure and spiritual conceptions we cannot say. But there is no reason why this enlightenment should not reach back into a very distant past, conveying spiritual truth to men in the very infancy of the world. The time came at last when the oral "generations," generations of the heaven and the earth, generations of Adam, generations of Abraham and others, were written down in a book. But the inspiration did not begin with the book. It was far older than the book, as far back as the Holy Spirit had taught those whom He chose to receive His message. Nor was it given to these by the spoken word sounding in human ears. We are taken back to an age when simple impressions of childlike races took the form of stories. Then in that day, and from that day for all time, spirit-taught men gave us these old-world stories to be to us vehicles of spiritual truth. As Calvin says: "They ought not to be made the subject of demonstration and argument, but obtain the credit they deserve by the testimony of the Spirit." And as Hooker says: "They are truth and most infallible certainty, the end being known whereunto they are directed."

But no review of the authority of the Holy Spirit in relation to Scripture can be complete which omits all reference to two other subjects: (1) The character attributed to God in the Old Testament; (2) the miracles of the Bible.

(1) The Character attributed to God in the Old Testament.

The chief difficulty of the Old Testament to many modern Bible readers is the strange intermingling of the loftiest conceptions of God with the ascription to Him as well of wrathful passions, as of trifling interferences in the ordinary life of man. From the grievous punishment of the first sin, from the overwhelming of the whole world in the Flood, through the slaughter of the Midianites, Canaanites and Amalekites, the treachery of Jael, the cold-blooded butchery of Agag, down to the massacre of the Prophets of Baal, and the vengeance on the children who mocked Elisha, we are constantly face to face with a terrible God, to Whose personal act or to Whose command these merciless punishments are ascribed, or Whose approval of them is implied. He proclaims Himself to be a jealous God, Who visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Him. He is also represented as concerned with Sarah's laughter, with Jacob's sheep-breeding, with the meals prepared for Him by Gideon and by Manoah, with Gideon's fleece, with the intrigues of David's court, with the widow's cruse, with the lost axe head, with the bones of the old prophet who deceived the man of God, with Naaman's leprosy, and Hezekiah's sickness. These are but samples of the constant Divine intervention as recorded in the Old Testament, offending perpetually the Roman maxim "that a god is not to be brought on the stage unless there is a difficulty that really calls for His action." It is well to note these, for they lead us towards an understanding of the yet more serious moral difficulties. We are reminded that the Israelite lived in a world which

was full of the glory of God. To him that presence was as real as the presence of his fellow-men, only far more ubiquitous. "Whither," he cried, "shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or Whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven Thou art there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."—(Ps. cxxxix. 7–11.) To many of us these words are poetry. To the Israelite they were sober prose. To us it savours of presumption to ascribe daily happenings to Divine interference. We profess to believe that God's "angels are ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation."—(Heb. i. 14.) We profess, but the Israelite saw the angels and conversed with them. He had not learnt to set up Nature as a rival to God, shutting God out of His world. To him it was sheer blasphemy to treat God as a "*roi fainéant*," "who will not do good, neither will He do evil."—(Zeph. i. 12.) Try as we may to enter into this habit of regarding the world, we cannot possibly do it. Generations of habitual banishment of God from daily life, long ages of restless seeking after the "causes of things," a whole world of political and social relations stand between us and this intimacy with God. Our very piety forbids us so to think of Him.

Yet who will say that the loss of this habit of mind has been all gain? No doubt it is a good thing to have got rid of impostures and self-deceits to which the habit easily lent itself. It had its temptations to indolence, to laying man's sins at the door of God, to the cultivation of false resignation. It too often played into the hands of the tyrant and oppressor.

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly
And ordered their estate.

For those who had the upper hand, the world with all its miseries was apt to appear the God-ordered world, and any attempt to unsettle its conditions was a blasphemy against the Most High. But this frame of mind is not reflected in the Old Testament. It belongs rather to the much later mechanical idea of God as a contriver, Who had invented and set going a world of mechanical laws; a society with its great cog-wheels and its little cog-wheels, so arranged that one could never step into the place of another—the society which, in its extremest form, is represented by the caste system of India. To that tendency, the Israelite never gave way, saturated though his thoughts were with the apprehension of an all-present God.

The God of Israel is the God of righteousness, the champion of the poor, the oppressed, the fatherless and the widow. To quote only one passage out of many: "Arise, O Lord, O God, lift up Thine hand: forget not the poor. Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God, and say in his heart, 'Thou wilt not require it.' Thou hast seen it, for Thou beholdest mischief and spite to take it into Thine hand. The helpless committeth himself unto Thee; Thou hast been the helper of the fatherless."—(Ps. x. 12–15.) When we stumble at what S. (!) Dionysius the Areopagite calls the "bold fictions of God and puerile myths" of the Old Testament, we should try to picture to ourselves a world in which law did not exist, in which might was right, the gods of which either absented themselves, or became partakers in its low tricks, crimes and frauds. Then

call we to mind the little people hated by the whole world, cut off from it by their Sabbaths and laws of holiness, and there see burning steadily the light of faith in a God Who was righteous and upholder of the right, Who hated oppression, Who loved the poor, protected the stranger, cared even for merciful treatment of the beasts that perish.

This faith had its serious difficulties. Jehovah was hemmed in on all sides by the gods of mighty Empires, the gods of Egypt, of the Hittites, of Assyria, as well as of the Philistines, the Moabites, Amalekites, and Canaanites. Without committing ourselves to the admission that the gods of these nations were regarded by Israel as gods on the same level with Jehovah, we cannot doubt that the extinction of Jehovah worship was a possibility constantly haunting the minds of devout Israelites. Polytheism can always make room for new gods, but the one God is, of necessity, a jealous God. "He is God and there is none else."—(Is. xlvi. 9.) The words are indeed found in the deutero-Isaiah, but the exclusiveness of Jehovah is implied in the whole Priestly document, to which a date has been assigned in this work far earlier than the date fixed by Higher Criticism (p. 175) Faith in Jehovah required exclusion of foreign wives, who would bring their gods and goddesses with them. From Rachel, who brought away the images of Laban, down to Jezebel with her Baal, Israel was in constant danger of corruption by strange women, and it is in the light of this danger that we must read the commands to exterminate whole peoples. Religious toleration was an impossibility for a monotheistic race in a polytheistic world. We cannot, with our freely circulated Bible, our civilisation built up on

ages of Christian teaching, really put ourselves in the position of those who had no literary standards of right and wrong, no fixed literary criteria, who were swayed by rumours, mass-impulses, blood feuds and blood lusts, so that the promptings which to us would be a demonaic orgy were to them a Voice of God. Yet even we have lived to learn what sacred guises mere war frenzy may assume.

Probably no small part of our Biblical difficulties is due to our habit of reading the Bible in separate chapters, and concentrating our thoughts on small portions to the exclusion for the time being of all the rest. Yet we are warned in our Twentieth Article of Religion that even the Church " may not so expound one place of Scripture that it be contrary to another "—a principle which devout Jews express in the form that as between two expressions concerning God we must follow the higher and not the lower. For us the overwhelmingly important fact is that the Old Testament has been for the world the impregnable rock on which has rested faith in one God—a righteous God and merciful, the refuge of the oppressed, the Covenant-keeper, Whose self-sacrificing Love has found a way to restore to Himself even the breakers of the covenant which His mercy had framed. It is this great service which guarantees the inspired character of the Old Testament, even apart from our Lord's use of it, and His treatment of it as the Word of God. The Holy Spirit still witnesses through our consciences to the Old Testament, and teaches us also how to use it.

(2) The Miracles of the Bible

It is obvious that those who disbelieve all miracles

must reject large portions of the Bible as historically untrustworthy. Some of these portions, notably those which relate to our Lord Himself, are at the very foundation of our faith. On the other hand, any philosophy of miracles is, from the point of view taken in this book, superfluous. Our Blessed Lord Himself, if we have rightly presented Him, is *the* miracle above all miracles : *the* miracle which makes all other miracles possible, and some miracles credible. Our task is not to prove that miracles *may* happen, but to consider what we really mean by a miracle, and then what is meant by belief in a miracle.

A miracle, then, is an occurrence, or combination of occurrences which

(1) Is contrary to the universal experience of mankind up to the time of its happening, and cannot be accounted for by such experience.

(2) Is vouched for by a trustworthy eyewitness or recorder, and is by him attributed to Divine agency.

(3) Is significant of Divine purpose or meaning.

(1) *Contrary to experience.*—Reasons have already been given (p. 200) for using this phrase in preference to any that speaks of Laws of Nature. More than half the difficulty presented by miracles arises from the false conception of Nature as a totality with some organisation of its own. We have no knowledge of any such totality. We can speak of our own experience, and often with good reason, of the universal experience of mankind, so far as it has been recorded. On the basis of that experience we can build expectations and found actions. Regularity of occurrence, symmetry, development, which we appear to observe without us, suggest

Mind and Will not our own, and far above our own. The closer our observation the stronger are these suggestions, and the stronger our belief that this order will not be idly, and without purpose, disturbed. From apparent disturbances we argue the need of closer observation. If we knew all, we should find that there had been no disturbance.

Hence is derived the great contrast, in attitude towards miracles, between the ancient and the modern mind. Miracles are apparent disturbances of order. The strength with which time and observation enforce on us the idea of order makes belief in disturbance as difficult to us as it was easy to those who had not our experience behind them. We are even justified in saying that, if we knew all, we should find that there had been no disturbance.

An excellent illustration is afforded by James Paton's account of his digging a well in the New Hebrides. The savages, whose only experience of drinkable water was that it came from heaven, took Paton's digging for water to be sheer insanity. It became a test of the power of his God, and of the truth of Paton's message. He had accompanied his digging with prayer. The story must be read in his book to realise its close resemblance in many ways to the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel. To the islanders the appearance of water in the well was a veritable miracle. So they regarded it. So, no doubt, they told it. It led to their conversion. To James Paton it was a notable answer to prayer, for he knew little about such sources of water, and his guidance to choice of a right spot may well be regarded as an impulse from above. But *we* do not call the occurrence a miracle, because our experience supplies the link

between the digging and the inflow of sweet water.

It is more than possible that some events recorded as miracles in the Bible would, if we knew all the facts, fall under the head of so-called Providential occurrences. It is not unbelievers, but devout Bible students who have suggested explanations of several of the plagues of Egypt and of the crossing of the Red Sea. But they were miracles to those who observed and recorded them. Nay, more, until we know *all* the conditions of our experience, we too will be unable to draw any accurate distinction between a miracle and a Providential occurrence. We know in the latter case some of the links that co-ordinate the event with our experience, but we do not know all: we do not know in fact when, and why, our will coincides or does not coincide with the Divine, but we do know "that if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us, and if we know that He heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him."—(1 John v. 14.)

For the time being our limited experience finds in the Bible record contradictions to the expectations of experience, contradictions of which we can give no account but this that God willed them.

(2) *Evidence* of these happenings must submit to all the ordinary rules of evidence. It is difficult to set aside Hooker's saying (Vol. I., p. 323) "that it is not to be required, nor can be exacted at our hands, that we should yield unto anything other assent than such as doth answer the evidence which is to be had of that we assent unto." It is on this field that the contest concerning many miracles has been fought, and will be fought. If, for instance, the book of Daniel was written by himself, his general character, as evidenced by the

book, will lend a strong presumption that his narrative of the miracles there recorded actually occurred: but the evidence is greatly weakened, or even disappears, if the book was written centuries later than his time to encourage the Jews under the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes. The difficulty is to find critics on either side whose bias as to the date of the book is beyond suspicion. There are some who say with Chillingworth (*Works*, Vol. II., p. 413): "Reason will convince any man, unless he be of a perverse mind, that Scripture is the Word of God: and then no reason can be greater than this: God says so, therefore it is true." On the other side it is difficult not to agree with Dr. Sanday (Preface to Box's *Ezra-Apocalypse*, Prefatory Note, p. 6) that "there is a danger of looking for too much logical symmetry and consistency, which is more to be expected in the literature of Greece and of the West than in that of the East." These words were written in 1912. They find a much stronger echo in Professor Gwatkin's *Knowledge of God* (Vol. II., p. 6), who writes of "a critical school which darkens counsel by dating the prophets before the Law, rooting out every trace of miracle and prophecy, and amending the narrative till pious readers can hardly recognise it." The whole passage is well worth careful study, for Professor Gwatkin was as honest as he was clear-minded, and his mind was trained scientifically in the weighing of evidence. He was very far from rejecting indiscriminately the work of Old Testament criticism. But patient students of that criticism too often have cause to complain of "the rooting out every trace of miracle and prophecy" as manifested in determining the dates of books.

The question of *evidence* is, at present, far from simple. Those who insist that the miracles of the Bible must be believed, because the Bible is the Word of God, simply dispense with evidence in the ordinary sense of the term. Their conviction as to the character of the book dispenses them from all examination of evidence, but at a cost to which reference has already been made (p. 209). Those who determine to root out all miracle and prophecy do, in fact, disqualify themselves as literary critics, in spite of all their learning. We are also sorely in need of some dispassionate test of the accuracy of Oriental tradition.—We are far too much slaves of the written document, living as we do, in a world of literary composition. Memory has been weakened. The value attached to verbatim repetition (of which our children are often witnesses) has passed out of sight. A more sober criticism of the evidence for Biblical narratives will be the work of a later age. For the present we must not be surprised that even with those who admit the possibility and, under certain conditions, the probability of miracles, there remains an element of doubt as to the historical evidence for some of the miracles recorded in the Bible.

(3) *The Meaning and Purpose of Miracles.*—Upon this point we may claim guidance from our Lord and His Apostles, as well as from the whole tenour of the Bible itself. We find, for instance, the demand for miracles as bare "signs" consistently rejected. When our Lord was asked for a "sign," He wrought no miracle, but referred to the sign of the prophet Jonah. In this answer there was double force: *first*, the refusal to use miracles for the purpose of gratifying curiosity, and, *secondly*, the spiritual meaning attached to the story of Jonah

was made more important than the story itself. Again, when the multitude after the miraculous feeding of the 5,000, demanded still some sign: "What then doest Thou for a sign that we may see and believe Thee? What workest Thou? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of Heaven to eat'"—the demand for a sign was refused. "The Bread of God is that which cometh down out of Heaven, and giveth life unto the world."—(S. John vi. 30, 31, 33.) No more emphatic tribute could have been paid to the spiritual value of a miracle as outweighing its importance as a historical event. In the same way S. Paul, when the Jews of Corinth demanded a sign, replied: "We preach Christ crucified." (1 Cor. i. 23.) The Cross was the only sign that he would give. As our Lord had insisted on the spiritual meaning of the manna-miracle, both in His Temptation and in His discourse after the feeding of the 5,000, so S. Paul treated the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea as a baptism, adding: "Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of a spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.—(1 Cor. x. 2, etc.)

This spiritual treatment of miracles conveys, indeed, no sort of disbelief in their actual occurrence. Nor is it at all strange that the faithful should feel a sense of disloyalty in doubting that which our Lord and His Apostles accepted without question. What is more difficult to maintain is that either our Lord or His Apostles would have set aside a great volume of facts, which appear to the critics to affect the historical evidence for miracles. It seems consonant with due reverence to say: (1) That they would not have dis-

regarded facts; (2) that they would have treated guesses as guesses; (3) that they would have affirmed in the strongest terms their faith in the possibility and actual occurrence of miracles and of prophetic predictions.

But it must not be forgotten that neither our Lord nor His Apostles would have regarded intellectual assent to the statements of Scripture as faith in Scripture. It was a constant reproach addressed to the Jews by our Lord that they did not really believe the Scriptures. Yet they would have regarded dissent from any statement contained in them as flat blasphemy. We may be equally sure that He would not have disregarded, but would have lovingly appreciated faith in the living God and in His Power and Will to deliver, even if that faith had been mixed with doubt as to the historical evidence for certain miracles. It is no violence to our Lord's words to S. Thomas to think of them in this connection: "Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—(S. John xx. 29.) Faith in the Word of God contained in Scripture is surely not less commendable in His sight when it is found to exist in the face of certain Scriptural doubts and difficulties. Protestants, at all events, must beware of the grave error that identifies faith with intellectual assent to propositions. Their best evidence for the credibility of miracles is the witness of miracles of grace, the witness of deliverance of captives from the bondage of sin, of lives that evidence a growing likeness to Christ, of love that triumphs over opposition, disappointment, envy and provocation. This is that demonstration of the Spirit and of power with which S. Paul approached Corinth, when he refused

to work any sign but the preaching of the Cross. This is the spirit that is the true spirit of revelation, for it leads us to knowledge of the inmost thoughts of God.—(1 Cor. ii. 11.)

On the other hand, the danger of exalting the intellectual at the expense of the spiritual is at least as conspicuous in the critical school as in the conservative. The very *raison d'être* of the critical school is to present religion as rational. Its strength is in the Universities, and its chief propagators occupy professorial chairs. In the recent Modernist Conference at Cambridge, only two of those who read papers were parochial clergy. The rest were Deans, Dons, Schoolmasters, and Laymen. The whole atmosphere was that of the grove and the cloister. "The loud stunning tide of human care and crime" found no echo there. In the 350 pages of the Report "sin" and "sinners" are not mentioned on more than three or four pages, and on one only at all seriously. But, without dwelling unduly on that somewhat nebulous search for a new creed, and taking into account only the critics who have not allowed their criticism to affect the New Testament, there is perceptible throughout these writers the influence of the spirit that set out to destroy Bibliolatry, and that rejoices too often in its achievement. The debt which the world owes to the uncriticised Bible is too often overlooked, the great release from sacerdotal tyranny, the purging of the official Church from open and unblushing immorality, the bringing of lofty ideals of Christian life into the homes of the people, as a life that laymen ought to live, the recognition of the value of each several man in the sight of God, the message of restoration to the profligate, the outcast, the harlot, the reformation of prisons, the

bursting of the bonds of slavery, the proclamation of the glad tidings of reconciliation to the whole world, these are but a portion of the blessings that the modern world owes to the uncriticised Bible, placed in the hands of the unlearned, as God's message to them. It is asked, not in any spirit of hostility, but with all respect, what are the corresponding (surely they should be greater) benefits that have flowed from what claims to be more accurate study of the Bible. The answer will probably be that a means of reconciliation between the Bible and modern science has been opened: that a very serious spread of infidelity might have resulted from obstinate adhesion to the conservative position, that more intelligent religious instruction has been made possible. Such results are on no account to be undervalued. But that which is so urged is all intellectual gain, and we still look for proofs of spiritual power. We have, or think we have, a sounder history of the development of Hebrew religion—though even here criticism reminds us too often of the school-boy who in scientific zeal has pulled his watch to pieces and put it all together again except the mainspring, unfortunately mislaid. But Hebrew religion will not deliver a sinner from the power of sin. The Old Testament has been used by the Holy Spirit for this work, and especially the Psalter. An appeal is sincerely addressed to the teachers of the Higher Critical school to use their research in such a way as to make it lead up more clearly than did the old interpreters to the miracle of the Christ. They did find Christ in the Old Testament from end to end. Those who studied the Bible under them say to the critics: "You have robbed us of the prophecies which we traced from the Fall to the last page of Malachi, you have cast

the trail of pseudonymous literature on the ceremonial law and on the marvellous appeals of Deuteronomy, you have removed some Messianic prophecies, altered the significance of others; you have turned loose an army of redactors and revisers too often alleged to be re-writing or re-editing books in their own private interests; the Bible which God used to bring us to Christ is so much altered by your re-editing, re-dating, re-translating, that the old Book is almost gone. What have you to give us in exchange?" This is the question which is respectfully addressed to the leaders of Higher Criticism. They are not all of them unconscious of its urgency. Dr. Peake's *Commentary on the Bible* is an attempt to meet the need that has been created. But serious and sincere as that attempt is, it has not been found successful by those whose position is represented above. It is the certitude and power of the Holy Spirit that is missed in the modernised Old Testament. Hebrew religion may serve to introduce us to Jesus the moral and social reformer. But something much more like the Old Testament was, in fact, the Divine preparation for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Friend of sinners, and the Saviour of the world.

CHAPTER XIV

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

Contrast between the forerunner and the Christ.—The "solitary" and the "social."—The brotherhood which Christ formed and left.—The primacy of Peter.—Its character attested by New Testament history.—The Spirit filled ecclesia—Hort.—What of the tradition behind the Scripture?—N. P. Williams on Tradition.—Dr. Turner on Apostolic succession.—The want of agreement among Bishops.—The expedient of Councils.—Papal Infallibility.—Difficulty of maintaining the Cyprianic position.—Its breakdown in history.—The Roman Church—its position examined.—Promise of the Spirit to Jewish Church fulfilled only to the inner community, the true Israel.—Claim of infallibility must be corroborated by actual sanctity.—The Spirits must be tested.—The Creeds an instance.—The test applied to history of Papacy.—Its claim to rule conscience.—Its world policy.—The carrying over of politics into Reformed Churches, and its failure.—Spiritual successes of Reformed Churches.—What about the unity of S. John xvii. 21?—The Lambeth appeal.—Search for formulæ of reunion—its dangers.—The unity which is being formed by the Spirit.—Separation when justified.—The authority of separated Churches.

THE Gospel history, or rather the history of our Lord's ministry, opens with an arresting contrast between our Lord and His fore-runner. The Baptist is the child of the desert, the voice of one crying in the wilderness. His rough dress, his homely fare, his denunciation of constituted society, his proclamation of root and branch reform, his indifference to the number of his converts, and his speedy passage from the desert to the dungeon, combine to mark him as a second Elijah, as last of the Prophets, greater than all the Prophets, but a "solitary" from the beginning to the end of his career. Such we might have expected the Messiah to be, as isolated as His own herald. But, in fact, we have the home in Nazareth, the family life, "the brothers," the neighbours, the school, the Synagogue, the caravan journey

to Jerusalem, the marriage feast, the free intercourse with multitudes, and last but not least, the selection of the Twelve " to be with Him."

This deliberate choice of constant companionship at all hours, except the long nights spent in solitary communion with His Father, stamps Christianity for all time as a social religion, a life to be lived among men and for men. There was a break, it is true, of family ties. " He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."—(S. Matt. x. 37.) There were occasionally retreats into the desert, though even there the multitudes followed. But the outstanding feature of the ministry was that of constant intercourse, social as well as religious, of accessibility, of readiness to answer questions, remove difficulties, heal sicknesses—it was a life of service. This is to be remembered when, after the Resurrection, the great commission is given: " 'As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.' "—(S. John xx. 21, 22, 23.) What mountains of authority have been built upon these words! Yet behind them has always stood the saying: " As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you ": and again behind that, " I am in the midst of you as He that serveth "—(S. Luke xxii. 27): and once more behind that, " The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."—(S. Matt. xx. 28.)

The indications are clear that our Lord willed to leave on earth a brotherhood conspicuous for its obedience to His new command: " That ye love one another, even as I have loved you."—(S. John xiii. 34.) It also appears

that He willed that this brotherhood should bear witness of Him throughout the world, and that it should have as its doctrinal basis the Messiahship and Divine Sonship of Jesus. This brotherhood, which is twice called in the Gospels the Church, was to proclaim the coming Kingdom, and in that Kingdom the Twelve Apostles were to have thrones of Judgment, and Peter was to hold the keys (S. Matt. xvi. 19) to bind and to loose—that is, to have authority administrative and legislative, "opening and shutting, binding and loosing." The Kingdom was to be inaugurated when the Son of Man came in the clouds of Heaven. The exact force of these Apocalyptic words will declare itself when the Revelation is no longer a promise of the future, the day when the earnest expectation of creation shall behold the revealing of the sons of God.—(Rom. viii. 19.) But it is to Peter, as the first to recognise the foundation truth of the Church, that they are addressed. They are personal, and were not used even by Peter himself as warranting any right to "lord it over God's charge." "Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another" (1 Peter v. 3, 5) let humility be your badge of service, for service is your office. So Peter brings us back to the saying: "As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you."

It was necessary to mention this passage in the forefront of any discussion on the authority of the Church, because of the all too famous misuse of these words, a misuse which could have no sort of justification unless it had pleased our Lord that no other record of His Words or of the history of His Church should reach us. When they are read in the light of the rest of the New Testament, it is clear that neither Peter nor the Church re-

garded that Apostle as having any special or indisputable primacy. In Jerusalem James, the Lord's brother, is president of the Council held there; the Apostleship of the Gentile Churches is by agreement of the Church committed to Paul; when Peter writes he writes to the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles, even though he writes from Rome, and joins with his own greetings the greetings of his wife: "Mark my son, and my wife, the fellow-elect lady in Babylon, salute you."—(1 Peter v. 17.) (See Dr. Bigg on 1 Peter, *International Critical Commentary*, p. 75.)

The last chapter of S. John removes any reasonable doubt whether our Lord's saying was well known in the early Church. The impressive thrice-repeated personal commission: Feed My lambs, Tend My sheep, Feed My sheep, appears there closely connected with the much-disputed words: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"—(S. John xxi. 22.) It is impossible to doubt that the date of our Lord's return was the subject of much discussion in the early Church. The saying, the incidents connected with it, could not fail to be well known in all circles of the Christian community throughout the world. Those incidents gave prominence to S. Peter, and after his fall reinstated him in his former position in the Church. All this, we repeat, was matter of common knowledge. All tended to single him out for no ordinary primacy in the Apostolic age. Yet nothing is more clear from the records than that he enjoyed no such primacy. He was conspicuous beyond a doubt. Together with James and John he appeared be one of the "pillars."—(Gal. ii. 9.) He was imprisoned with a view to his execution by Herod because of his prominence.—(Acts xii. 3.) He took a leading part in

the admission of Gentiles to the Church without circumcision—though not a little against his own will. He had to defend his action before "those of the circumcision."—(Acts x., xi.) His name was freely used by parties conspiring against the action and authority of S. Paul (1 Cor. ix. 5), and he was, once at least, in open conflict with his brother Apostle.—(Gal. ii. 11, etc.) But in all the record of the Acts and of the Epistles there is nothing to correspond with the monarchic position assigned to him in S. Matthew, nor even with the spiritual leadership designated for him in the last chapter of S. John. As in the Gospels, so in the rest of the New Testament, he was a leader not by natural qualification, but because he was appointed: not an organiser of victory, not a statesman with vision into the distant future. His horizon was limited by longing expectation for the return of his beloved Lord. We shall therefore be sorely disappointed if we search the pages of the New Testament for a strong monarchic Church organisation. We find not one Church with ordered hierarchic ranks, but Churches in houses, Churches in cities. These Churches have founders, usually, but not always, Apostles. Apostles maintain correspondence with them, and expect deference from them rather than compulsory obedience.—(1 Cor. iv. 21; 1 Peter v. 1; 2 John 5.) In the churches are elders who "tend the flock of God" (1 Peter v. 2), "who labour, are over them in the Lord and advise them" (1 Thess. v. 12), "who are their overseers" (bishops).—Acts xx. 28.) In Jerusalem, as we have "chief priests and elders," so we have "apostles and elders." At S. Paul's last visit to the city "*all* the elders" are present with S. James, to give advice which does not turn out very happily: nor

is there any mention of their attempting to defend S. Paul either in the Sanhedrim or before the Roman governors. It seems that they did not even write to commend him to the Church in Rome.—(Acts xxviii. 21.) We have mention of Bishops distinct from elders in the Pastoral Epistles, and, in the seven Churches of Asia "angels," as to whom there is considerable uncertainty. We have also mention of prophets, of virgins who prophesied, of women prophesying, of evangelists, pastors, teachers, powers, gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues, and interpreters of tongues. But of anything like fixed constitution there is no trace: still less of a constitution common to all Churches. We find deacons, but never any mention of priests. It is often insisted that our Lord founded a Church and committed it to the care of the Apostles. But it is more true to the facts to say that He gathered together a band of Apostles "that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to cast out devils" (S. Mark iii. 14), and that He commissioned them to be His witnesses after His departure, and endued them, and probably others with them, with the power of the Holy Spirit to forgive and retain sins.—(S. John xx. 22, 23.) But the gifts of the Holy Spirit were evidently not confined to the Apostles. He was working in all the Saints, bestowing on each that special gift which qualified him to serve as a member of the Body of Christ, and, above all, filling them with the best of all gifts—Love, "love that envied not, vaunted not itself, was not puffed up."—(1 Cor. xiii. 4.) Again we find ourselves in the brotherhood of love: again brought back to the words: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The Church of the first

century was possessed of marvellous gifts, extended itself with extraordinary rapidity, endured martyrdom with surpassing constancy, but, in spite of the various forms commissioning the Apostles with authority, it was not organised by law, but by love. Dr. Hort is undoubtedly right when, after examining all the New Testament evidence with characteristic scrupulousness and impartiality, he wrote (*Christian Ecclesia*, p. 232): "In this, as in so many things, is seen the futility of endeavouring to make the Apostolic history into a set of authoritative precedents to be rigorously copied without regard to time or place, thus turning the Gospel into a second Levitical Code. The Apostolic Age is full of embodiments of purposes and principles of the most instructive kind, but the responsibility of choosing the means was left for ever to the Ecclesia itself, and to each Ecclesia, guided by ancient precedent on the one hand, and adaptation to present and future needs on the other. The lesson-book of the Ecclesia is not a law but a history."

This conclusion will perhaps not be disputed—it may even be welcomed by those who hold that the authority of Scripture needs to be supplemented by the authority of the Church, making tradition where Scripture is silent or uncertain, a substitute for Scripture, and even exalting it above Scripture when we are referred to tradition as the interpreter of Scripture. It will be suggested that even in Scripture itself importance is assigned to Church traditions (1 Cor. xi. 2), and that in course of time traditions grew in importance. The traditions, the deposit that has to be guarded, the gift connected with laying on of hands, loom larger in the later Epistles than in the earlier. As the time draws on when Apostolic direction will be removed, the importance of tradition

and of organisation steadily increases. On this very ground critics have challenged the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles. The challenge at least confirms the contention that we are not to judge Church organisation by the Apostolic days, when the personal care of the Apostles made constituted order less necessary. But tradition is the link by which the continuity of Church life is maintained. To tradition we owe the very Scriptures which are set up as over-riding all the authority of tradition.

The Catholic view of tradition (as defined by the Rev. N. P. Williams, Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion* (Vol. XII., p. 412) maintains that "the deposit of faith (*depositum fidei*) was partly taken over by Christ from the existing Jewish Church, and partly revealed by Him to His Apostles and other hearers during His earthly life, and especially during the great "forty days," which, according to S. Luke (Acts i. 3) intervened between His Resurrection and Ascension, and during which He spoke of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. He thus committed to them—either by stamping with His own approval certain already existing Jewish beliefs, or by Himself revealing fresh truths for the first time—in germ and essence the great doctrines of the orthodox faith and system of Sacraments which He instituted for the salvation of mankind. He told His adherents that they were to regard themselves as being the true Israel, His Ecclesia, which, in some sense, He would build upon Peter as a foundation.—(Matt. xvi. 18.) With this divinely-founded Society He promises to be present all the days, even unto the consummation of the age (Matt. xxviii. 20), and to it He promises to send the Paraclete Who would guide its members into all truth.

—(John xvi. 13.) These promises are interpreted by Catholics as guaranteeing the infallibility of the Church in the interpretation and definition of the authentic contents of the deposit. It is further believed that within the Church the special task of preserving (and, when need should arise, of defining) the deposit was committed by Christ to the Apostles and to their successors the Bishops."

It was better that this definition of tradition should be given by a writer in full sympathy with the theory. The development of it so far as Apostolic succession is concerned is worked out with great care by Dr. Turner in his Essay on " Apostolical Succession " in *Essays of the Early History of the Church and Ministry*, edited by H. B. Swete. We there find : (1) the Gnostic boast of possessing esoteric truth answered by the three-fold cord of Creed, Scriptures, and Apostolic succession, by which at first no more is meant than that the Bishop of the Church in question, (and of all other Catholic Churches,) could show that he was the successor of the successor, etc., of the Apostolic founder, and had been lawfully elected and received the gift (*charisma*) by laying on of Episcopal hands. (2) The next marked stage in advance is formed by the introduction of *sacerdotal* language. Sacerdotal language, strictly speaking, is absent from Irenæus, Hegesippus and Tertullian. It begins to make its appearance with Hippolytus. For him Bishops are not merely in succession from the Apostles, but they are themselves successors of the Apostles. They have the gift of High Priesthood. " Their successors we are, and their grace we share, their High Priesthood and their teaching authority and are reckoned guardians of the Church." (3) With Cyprian such language is a common-

place. The Church now takes the place of the Churches : so that a Bishop is rather a Bishop of the Church at large than the Bishop of his own community. Whereas Irenæus found in the Bishop duly appointed a guarantee for the truth of the doctrine, he now becomes the guarantee for the reality of the Christian Sacraments, and the whole question of the validity or invalidity of Christian orders is opened.

For, alas ! whereas the theory of Apostolic succession should have secured complete agreement of doctrine among Bishops, it began to be manifest that such agreement did not exist. A new departure was made when Councils of Bishops were summoned, theoretically from all parts of the world, and therefore called œcumenical. " Catholic " truth was now determined by numbers, and numbers by considerations not always purely doctrinal. The minority became heretics. " But," writes Mr. Williams (Hastings' *Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII., p. 413 (*a*)), " whilst shedding, so to speak, these dissentient bodies round its periphery, the ' great Church,' the Church of the majority of the depositaries, the Church of the Græco-Roman Empire, the Melkite or Imperial Church, as it was derisively called by the Eastern schismatics, held together round the Imperial throne and the great Apostolic See of Rome, maintaining its majestic unity unbroken, with the brief exception of the Zenonian and Photian schisms, for a thousand years. In the great or Melkite Church as it stood on the eve of the great schism of 1054, the fourfold structure of traditionism . . . had come into full, explicit, and conscious existence in the most imposing and magnificent form which has ever existed upon earth. The Church, the hierarchy, the canon of Scripture, and the œcu-

menical councils are all there, each fulfilling its harmonious part in the task of preserving, elucidating, and defining the apostolic deposit."

Since the great schism between east and west œcumenical councils are no longer possible, at all events, from the Anglican point of view. For the Anglo-Catholic refuses to regard the Eastern or Orthodox Church as heretical. He could not do so without admitting his own Church to be in heresy also. For the Roman Catholic the question of Councils, and indeed, of tradition itself, has become unimportant since the last great Vatican Council of 1870 declared that the infallibility of the Church resided in the Pope decreeing *ex Cathedra*. Councils and Tradition are both swallowed up by the Papacy: "I am Tradition," said Pio Nono. The basis of authority in the Church of Rome is no longer Scripture, nor tradition, nor history, but an act of dogmatic self-assertion.

For our own Church attempts have been made to find a basis of authority in Apostolical succession while evading the logical process which culminates in Papal Infallibility. These attempts are at least as old as the day of Cyprian. They allow to Rome the position of "Principalis Ecclesia," explaining it after Archbishop Benson (*Benson's Cyprian*, p. 538): "First and highest in a great Republic of Churches, securing administrative unity and freedom, possessing a general pre-eminence as distinct from a special function, a constitutional pre-eminence as opposed to despotic rule." The great difficulty of this otherwise attractive theory has been to formulate any logical centre of unity. If, as Cyprian thought, the Bishops are Aaronic Priests, where is the High Priest? If they are Apostles, who among them

is to represent Christ? The strong pressure of the doctrine of one visible Church makes irresistibly for a visible Head of the visible Church, and all the more strongly since modern Anglicanism has repudiated the theory of National Churches, and has put out the claim that in relation to the State it is a Voluntary Corporation (*Church and State Report*, pp. 3 and 247). No doubt such a claim would have been easier to maintain if history had taken a course other than that which it actually took, if all the Western Churches independent of Rome had survived the Mohammedan and Barbarian invasions: if the African, Spanish, Gallican and Celtic Churches had made good their claim to independence; if the conversion of England had been carried out by British or Celtic missionaries. But none of these things happened. History fought against the theory of independent Episcopal Churches owing to the part played by Rome in the reorganisation of Western Europe, and owing to the wonderful way in which learning, art, and social order related themselves to, and sheltered themselves under, the protection of the Roman See. The stars in their courses fought against the Cyprianic theory. To go back to the New Testament is intelligible, but to go back to Cyprian is, at least on the face of it, arbitrary. It assigns no sufficient reason for the break that is thereby made with "the providential evolution of tradition."

Before passing to the position of the Reformed Churches, however, a few words must be first said as to the conception that the actual history of the Roman Church is an embodiment of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We may start, as do the advocates of tradition, with the Jewish Church. Whatever claims may be

made for it, and some very strong claims indeed may be made, it cannot be contended that it is a history of continuous progress in the direction which it ought to have followed. If we read the Old Testament, as it stands, we have a story of constant rebellion against the Will of God. The sin of idolatry, expelled by centuries of punishment, is replaced by the sins of legal self-righteousness, of hypocrisy, and of covetousness. The ruin is consummated by the rejection of the Messiah. Or, if the higher critical reading is accepted, we have in place of the sublime morality of the Prophets and their teaching of direct access to a holy and merciful God, the Priestly Code with its barren externalism and entire silence as to the spirit in which the sinner is to bring his atoning sacrifice to the altar. Yet the promises to Israel are as great as those of Christ to His Church, if not greater. "Fear not, O Jacob my servant, and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground. I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring."—(Isaiah xliv. 2–4.) And again: "As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever."—(Isaiah lix. 21.) Once more: "I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away

the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them."—(Ezek. xxxvi. 25, etc.) We have, here and elsewhere, distinct promises of the Holy Spirit, with a plain manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit. It makes no difference to our reasoning that a fuller outpouring of the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon His Church by the ascended Lord. Our contention is this : were these promises fulfilled to Israel as a nation ? That they were addressed to the nation is beyond dispute. But they were fulfilled, some will say even in our Lord's time, to the true Israel within Israel : others, perhaps, will say to the Church of Christ as the true Israel. But in either case they were not fulfilled to that race, that external body to whom they were addressed. That they may be, nay, will be, fulfilled one day to a redeemed Israel is not denied. But still to the Israel of our Lord's day they were not fulfilled, because the nation had not faith as a whole to lay hold of them.

What reason is there to suppose that in this respect the visible Church is better off than the visible Israel ? Has the Church no need of faith in order to inherit the promises ? Is the Apostolic succession a safer guarantee of right disposition of heart than the Levitical Priesthood ? Is there no need of the Apostolic warning : " Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well : by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not high-minded, but fear." —(Rom. xi. 19, 20.) In fact, the very argument on which the whole contention for the authority of tradition is based is a solemn warning against trust in external continuity. If the Church is the true Israel, as Mr.

Williams contends, then it is subject to the indispensable condition of vital union with Christ by faith, and that union must be manifest in the works and in the whole organisation and outlook of the Body that is so united. The life of the Head must be manifest in the members. If not, the warning once addressed to the Church of Ephesus holds good : " or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place."—(Rev. ii. 5.) Those who claim for the Church infallibility must prove for the Church not titular but actual sanctity.

Our Lord foretold, and history confirms His prediction, that such sanctity cannot be attained in this world by any external corporation. Even the Apostolic band included a covetous traitor, and the infant Church in the first flush of its Spirit-born enthusiasm, an Ananias and Sapphira. The true Israel has its own tradition, and those who will may read it, in the experience of the Saints of all ages, the witness of seekers after God throughout the whole world, the veritable Church Catholic. That which is called the Catholic and Apostolic Church is a " mixed Multitude," tracing its history and doctrine to Apostolic times. That history is full of instruction, and its traditions often most valuable. But the record is a mixed record of good and evil. That record leaves traditions on a different plane from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. These have an authority of their own, the ground of which it has been our endeavour in this volume to set forth, not it is hoped in a spirit of dogmatism, but of honest inquiry. But, after all, the Scriptures have been found by men of goodwill their own best authenticators. The failures of Christendom are not to be

attributed to the Scriptures, but to misinterpretation, neglect, or disregard of the Scriptures. With the traditions it is otherwise, as must be explained, not without consideration, it is hoped, for the sentiments of those who attach to them a joint authority with the authority of Scripture.

It is no part of the argument followed in this work that the Scriptures furnish an exhaustive account of the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. On the contrary, we have produced evidence for the existence of a Book of Testimonies, or Old Testament proofs, a traditional account, as it was suggested, of the teaching imparted on the road to Emmaus, and during the great Forty Days, when Jesus spake the things concerning the Kingdom of God. From the Apocalyptic and Pseudepigraphal Books, and from the teaching of the Chasidists, we have gathered sayings illustrative of His Messianic conceptions. Least of all is it any part of our position to deny that the Holy Spirit guided the Apostolic Church, for then we must put our pen through the whole of the New Testament. There is no reason to suppose that His guidance was withdrawn in the days that followed. But from Apostolic times it was necessary to use discernment. "Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God." —(1 John iv. 1.) The same necessity is shown in the allusions to false teachers throughout the Epistles to the Seven Churches. Nay, even Apostles could err.—(Galatians ii. 11, etc.) Our contention is, not that all traditions are false or superfluous, but that all must be tested by the Spirit of Truth, and by the mind of Christ as evidenced in the New Testament. We further claim that time and experience assist us greatly in this

work of discernment, for time brings to light dangers that lie concealed under specious arguments. Experience is to the Church of the later ages almost what prophecy was to the Church of old.

Of the value of this experience, no better illustration can be given than that which is contained in Lord Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, p. 278. The passage is so well known that we should hesitate to quote it were it not suggested that the doctrines contained in the three great creeds had no better foundation than the doctrines of Apostolical Succession or of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Lord Balfour there writes: "Whatever opinion the reader may entertain of the decisions at which the Churches arrived on the doctrine of the Trinity, it is at least clear that they were not in the nature of explanations. They were, in fact, precisely the reverse. They were the negations of explanations. The various heresies which it (*i.e.*, the Church) combated were, broadly speaking, all endeavours to bring the mystery as far as possible into harmony with contemporary speculations, Gnostic, Neo-Platonic, or Rationalising, to relieve it from this or that difficulty: in short, to do something towards 'explaining' it. The Church held that all such explanations or partial explanations inflicted irremediable impoverishment on the idea of the Godhead, which was essentially involved in the Christian revelation. They insisted in retaining that idea in all its inexplicable fulness; and so it has come about that while such explanations as those of the Arians, for example, are so alien and impossible to modern modes of thought that, if they had been incorporated with Christianity they must have destroyed it, the doctrine of Christ's Divinity still gives reality and life to the

worship of millions of souls, who are wholly ignorant both of the controversy to which they owe its preservation, and of the technicalities which it has involved."

Here is an example of doctrine wrought out under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with constant and direct appeal to the Scriptures, that has since been tested by the experience of ages and not found wanting, save by some of our modernist speculators, who would fain go back to explanations and attempted reconciliations with philosophic or scientific thought. The doctrine wrought out by loyalty to the New Testament as a whole has been found to be a teaching of the Spirit of Truth, bearing witness to Christ.

With this should be contrasted the fruit of the doctrine that Bishops were successors of the Priests of the Old Testament offering the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, and that Christ the High Priest had constituted S. Peter and after him the Bishop of Rome His earthly Vice-gerents. The tendency of this teaching, in the first instance, it may be, a fruit of mistaken but pious exegesis, has been brought out by time. Apart from all the personal corruptions of medieval Popes, the abuses attendant on the temporal power, and any other offences to the consciences of devout Catholics, which might be attributed to sins of individuals, it is sufficient to examine the doctrine by the ideal at which it aims. That ideal is the guidance of souls through the confessional to a right use of the Sacraments of Grace conveyed through Divinely appointed channels. Theoretically, the whole of human life in all its manifold relations, political, commercial, professional, industrial, theatrical, sporting, educational, even to the very games of boys and girls, the most intimate relation of husband and

wife, of father and child, all pass under the surveillance of the priesthood, from which there can be no secrets, since no human act or thought is wholly free from sin. The Christian world is subjected to a priestly class which, after all, is drawn from sinful humanity and subject to the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Spirit of Evil. Angels might be expected to fall if they were subjected to such a burthen. For human nature it is wholly intolerable. Such success as has attended the system has been due to its conscientious use by those who, humanly speaking, least stood in need of it. As a universally applied system, it could not stand the test of a single day's working. But there it is, the logical outcome of mistaken analogies, and of single texts construed to bear a meaning, contradicted by the whole mind of Christ as revealed in the New Testament. "If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—(S. John viii. 31, 32.)

Not less alien to the mind of Christ, but even more disastrous to Christendom was the tradition which, by making the Pope the earthly Vice-gerent of Christ, introduced the element of religion into the political struggles of Western Europe. This tradition had a two-fold consequence. In the first place, the clergy all over the States which recognised the Papacy became a Levitical caste asserting, as far as they could, not only their independence of secular tribunals, but also their right to adjudicate in all cases, which could by any ingenuity be claimed as ecclesiastical. From these clerical courts in all cases the appeal was to Rome, and it is hardly wonderful that the decisions of the Curia were at times suspected of being influenced by other considerations

than those of pure justice. The second consequence was the interference of the Papacy in international quarrels, culminating in the disastrous schism of the Papacy, and the use made by France of the Avignon Pope for purely French interests. The schism was healed, but the scandal to the conscience of Christendom was not healed. On the one side devout and tender consciences called for some closer following of Christ, for a Church which should answer more nearly to the model of Him Who said: "My Kingdom is not of this world"; "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."—(S. John xviii. 36, 37.) On the other hand, the growth of unbelief finding shelter even in the Papal Court, the growth of reckless cynicism as to international morality, and the ambition of young rival monarchs, bidding against one another for the prize of the imperial title, all tended to destroy faith in the Papacy as an institution founded by Christ to represent Him in the world. A new age dawned with the sixteenth century, more easy for us to understand who are passing through the early years of a new age, presenting not a few features of similarity to the sixteenth. Men were saying, as they say now: "The Church has been tried and found wanting," and were no longer satisfied that the Church which claimed their allegiance was indeed the true Church of Christ. That Church was confronted, as was natural, with the Scriptures.

The crime of Bibliolatry is often charged against the Reformation. Assuredly it was no small gain for Western Europe that the printed and translated Bible finding its way into the hands of the people revealed to them a Christ, other than the Christ presented by the

Curia, by far too many Episcopal palaces and abbeys, or by the noisy salesmen of Indulgences for sin. Small blame to those who believed that by going back to the New Testament a more Christlike Church could be constituted. It is true that they were misled by the example of the Papacy into the belief that in some shape or other the alliance between the civil and ecclesiastical power could hardly be too tightly framed. In point of fact, no other course was open to them. For where the civil authority was allied to Rome, non-Catholics soon found their way to the rack and the stake. The choice was between submission to the Papacy and the construction of a State Church on a Bible model with power and will to defend its subjects. The intermediate experiment of Henry VIII. depended too much on the monarch's personality, and had little promise of continuity. But, in all its grotesqueness and the horrible memories of lust and avarice attached to it, it stands on the pages of English history the bizarre record of an unreformed Church independent of the Papacy.

It shows a strange lack of historical instinct to judge the Reformers and the Reformed Churches from the standpoint of an age of toleration. No such condition was possible—it was hardly thinkable in the sixteenth century. The European question resolved itself into this. Was the combined force of the Papacy and Spain to dominate Christendom? And that problem was answered partly by Elizabethan diplomacy, and partly by the navy of England. Yet even that was only the first stage in the answer. The danger was not finally averted until with the accession of William III. and the victories of Marlborough in the subsequent reign, the peril of Papal supremacy was finally removed, and then,

but not sooner, the age of toleration became possible. In the interval, ecclesiastical uniformity was believed to be a necessary safeguard for national unity, and it was natural to appeal to the Bible not only in refutation of Papal tradition, but also in support of the main principles, if not the details, of a constitution for the Church visible.

History has not confirmed the expectation. On the other hand, it has shown that societies of members of the Church universal formed on a national basis, as in England and in Scotland, or on a doctrinal basis, as the Baptists, Independents, the Society of Friends, and in some sense the Wesleyans, to say nothing here of the Societies of Continental Protestants, have manifested the truest of all signs of Church life, that is, the Presence of Christ. If it be true as Irenæus taught, that "where the Spirit is, there is the Church," they have answered to that test. If the office of the Church is to continue the work of Christ on earth, to proclaim deliverance to to the captives of sin, and to preach the Gospel to the poor, they may maintain that they have been sent, even as Christ was sent on that mission of the Father. They have, as the Spirit taught them, preached the Apostolic doctrine, and held fast to the faith once for all delivered to the Saints. Signs and wonders have attested and confirmed their witness, conversions from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to the Kingdom of God. All this is so manifest that the more modern Roman Catholic teaching admits that members of these Churches may, under certain conditions, be said to belong "to the soul of the Church"—an admission which has its value, since it has been extorted by history, and is a long way from the old-fashioned

tenet that "there is no salvation outside the Church." It is an admission of spiritual life, and that life can only come from vital union with the living Head of the Church.

Of these Reformed Churches the Anglicans, Scandinavians, and Moravians have retained the threefold order of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and the Anglican insists that all her own ministers must be episcopally ordained. Episcopacy is accepted by us as consonant with Scripture and Church tradition, but not in such a way as to unchurch societies that are not Episcopalian. The time has been when Anglican Episcopacy was to some of the Reformed Churches the head and front of her offending; and Anglicans in their turn have used very harsh words of non-episcopal bodies. Those were evil days, going by, but not wholly gone. We may pray and work for their final disappearance.

But, if we accept as conformable to the working of the Holy Spirit the existence of a multitude of Churches, what becomes of the ideal of the one Church? We dare not forget the words of the great Intercessory Prayer: "That they may all be one: even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me."—(S. John xvii. 21.) Do they apply only and exclusively to the Church mystical, or to the Church visible also and, if so, in what sense? Bishop Westcott's comment is worth quoting: "There is, so to speak, an interchange of the energy of the Divine Life (Thou in Me and I in Thee) which finds a counterpart in the harmonious relation of the members of the Church. The true unity of believers, like the Unity of Persons in the Holy Trinity with which it is compared, is offered as something far more than a mere moral unity of purpose, feeling, affection; it is in

some mysterious mode which we cannot distinctly apprehend a vital unity.—(Romans xii. 5 ; Eph. iv. 4). In this sense it is the symbol of a higher type of life, in which each constituent being is a conscious element in the vast being of the whole. In " the life " and in " the life " only, each individual is able to attain its perfection. Such a conception, however imperfectly it may be grasped, meets many of the difficulties which beset the continuance of our present individual separation." This comment manifestly refers to the mystical Church, and to that Church in the life of the world to come. Indeed, often as the words are quoted with reference to the visible Church, it is impossible that our Lord should have conceived of its union as corresponding to the unity of Persons in the Blessed Trinity, and at the same time as a unity in which the evil were mingled with the good.

Further, history having proved the falsity of the tradition of unity realised under one earthly sovereignty has also disproved the hope entertained by some Reformed bodies, of governing the world by a Kingdom of Saints. It has also proved the uselessness of attempting to secure national uniformity by penal laws. But if uniformity is unattainable, is no other kind of unity possible ? To this question conflicting answers emerge. On the one hand " traditions " in the Reformed Churches, founded, as it is supposed, on true interpretations of Scripture, seem to involve far-reaching matters of principle and tend to continuance of separation. On the other hand, recognition of the Spirit and Mind of Christ dwelling in members of separated visible Churches clamours loudly for the breaking down of walls of partition, for interchange of ministry, and intercommunion

of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. The Lambeth appeal for unity was a genuine recognition of the desire for unity and a memorable attempt by the Anglican Bishops assembled in 1920 to give embodiment to the desire. A vision or ideal was held out to the Christian world of a Church with a common ministry commissioning the ministers of the various Churches to exercise their ministry throughout the whole Society. Federation of churches was not contemplated. Interference with the doctrine or discipline of churches was not contemplated. But all churches who responded to the ideal were invited to commission ministers of such churches to exercise their ministry in each several church. But this commission was to involve episcopal ordination of ministers who had not already received such ordination. Thus at once the conflict of traditions was called to light, and has not yet been found superable. The Lambeth appeal remains for the present an unrealised vision of the Church of God.

Two proposals for effecting greater unity should be mentioned. One is that points of agreement should be emphasised, endeavours made to ascertain the common principles which may underlie our differences in the hope of removing them by better understanding of one another's meaning until at last the residuum of difference might be found negligible, or easily brought within bounds of mutual toleration. To discourage such efforts would be unchristian. The difficulty that has always risen heretofore is well known. Formulæ are found to which disputants heartily desiring union can consent, though not always in the same sense. But the same formulæ submitted to the rank and file of the Churches arouse suspicion, and that the most dangerous of all

suspicion, the suspicion of betrayal. The attempted reconciliation of the Eastern and Western Churches in the fifteenth century is a classical instance of this danger. The real difficulty is not to find words and phrases, but to create in the mass of adherents a willingness to forget the past, to bury old prejudices, to substitute thought for feeling, reason for sentiment. The sentiment that binds together the members of a Church may appear to the logically minded a mere flag or banner. But flags after all rally men to action and unite them in common effort. The Comte de Chambord might have succeeded to the throne of his fathers if he would have accepted the "tricolour."

Another and less satisfactory proposal is to abolish creeds or reduce them to the barest minimum. It is true, no doubt, that our Lord taught His Apostles a prayer, not a creed: that he made "Love," not any particular doctrine, the mark by which they were to be distinguished. But we have seen at the beginning of this chapter that He made His Messiahship and Divine Sonship the rock on which He built His Church. When He permitted S. Thomas to say: "My Lord and My God," He gave sanction to words out of which the creeds of Christendom could not fail to grow. Not less creed-making were the words: "When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father." —(S. John xv. 26.) It is possible out of the Gospels, by critical processes, to construct a Christ Whose Personality being in fact human, removes the necessity for creeds. But that Christ is not the Christ of the Church of God. It is a poor Church unity which is secured by destroying the Church. The Body cannot live without the Head.

Lovers of the external unity of the Church must watch with deep interest the attempts that are being made to form a Church of India, a Church of China, a Church of Africa, and the development of the existing Church of Japan. How far these efforts will be successful, how long unity will be maintained time alone can show. For the present the Protestant Churches may fairly be confronted with this question: "You say that history has condemned the Roman attempt at preserving external unity, and shown that it is contrary to the mind of Christ. Can you maintain that Protestantism, with its innumerable sects and their rivalries, even jealousies, with the pressure that is put upon them by these rivalries to accommodate their doctrines to passing whims of public opinion, are really more Christian? Consider the want of discipline even in their own ministers, the vagueness of their doctrines, their trend towards Unitarianism. Are these Churches really founded on any rock at all, or on shifting sands? Can you say of such Churches as these: "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."—(Isaiah xxvi. 1.) Surely "that which you have built, if a fox go up, he shall break down your stone walls."—(Neh. iv. 3.)

To such criticisms our answer is that while we admit that human imperfections, and especially attempts of fallible men to state in precise definitions such inscrutable mysteries as predestination, election, assurance of salvation, indefectibility, and the like, have created divisions which ought not to have existed: while there are sins to lament which must grieve the Holy Spirit of God, yet for all that it does not follow that there is not under these differences a stronger unity than any that

external bonds can fashion, a unity of growth not of manufacture. That unity we believe is being wrought out by the Spirit of Truth in spite of the impatience and unbelief of men. He that built his house on the rock had to dig and to go deep (S. Luke vi. 48) before he could lay his foundation on the rock. We believe that the upbuilding of the Church of God has an analogy in Creation. The first impression of the visible order of things is of discord, of violent struggles for existence, and in our wisdom we fancy that we could have fashioned better. But fuller knowledge discloses harmony below apparent discord, unity far deeper than surface diversity. Even so we have faith to believe that what we see now in the Church of God is an unfinished work. The Spirit of Truth has for His pupils not men of unerring wisdom, but disciples slow to learn, and able to grasp no more than fragments of the whole design. Even when He is leading us, we only know in part.

But the very fact that the Churches are not held together by external bonds has its compensating advantages. No Protestant Church can claim infallibility, and therefore none of them is under obligation to defend all its past errors. None of them need be in the position which Newman described as fighting with one hand tied behind his back. If we try to imagine the Lambeth appeal accepted by all Protestants, and the formation, consequently, of a great Protestant Church, the decisions of such a Church would inevitably be claimed as the result of Divine inspiration, and before long the results of the claim might be very disastrous. There is a strength in lack of external cohesion, subject to one all-important condition; that is, growth in the Spirit of Love. May it not well be that for lack of receiving fully

the greatest gift that the Spirit has to give, the lesser gift of knowledge is withheld from us ?

Lastly, if it be asked : " What authority have these independent Churches, and whence is that authority derived ? Who commissioned Luther or Calvin, Zwingli or Leyden, Fox or John Wesley, above all, who commissioned Henry VIII. to found a Church ? " There is one simple and direct answer : The Founder of every Church and of all Churches is Jesus Christ.—(1 Cor. iii. 11.) No Church which is a true Church can claim a human Founder. " Is Christ divided ? Was Paul crucified for you ? "—(1 Cor. i. 13.) Neither the Church of England nor the Church of Scotland admits that it was founded at the Reformation. The contention of all the Reformed Churches is that they trace their descent to the Church of Apostolic days through a line of Saints, the true torch-bearers of Apostolic succession. Churches are not born nor kept in being by outward signs, but by indwelling Spirit. The life of the Spirit may be maintained, and has, in fact, been maintained, in ages when error and corruption abounded. What has really to be decided is the right of secession, or duty of submission to expulsion from, communions that have become untrue to the teaching and spirit of Christ. The justification of such separation is the necessity of pure witness to the world and the duty of saving the rising generation from false doctrine. If the Church should be the Teacher of Truth, and the spiritual home of saints, what is the duty of those who find themselves in an atmosphere of false doctrine and of connivance at wickedness among those who should be examples to the flock ? Duty to Christ, the duty of not building " wood, hay and stubble " on the foundation on which

"gold, silver and precious stones" should be erected, certainly calls for remonstrance. If, as in the Reformation age, remonstrance means persecution and expulsion, are not those who are so expelled in the position of the Apostles when official Judaism cast the followers of Jesus out of its fold? The fact that our Lord did not separate Himself, nor warn His disciples not to separate themselves, did not make their separation from the ancient Israel a sin. That the separated are a minority of the whole body does not prove them to be in the wrong in spite of Augustine's famous: "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum.*" The minority of two out of seventy were in the right when they refused to consent to the death of Jesus. Obviously such separations are to be avoided with all earnestness and humility. But there is a time when they become a duty, and the fault lies with those who make them to be a duty. Those who go out, if they take Christ with them, are at no loss to answer: "Who is their founder?", or "Whence they derive their authority?" They are not founding a new Church, but restoring the old, as did the Apostles in the Council of Jerusalem, *taking then for their* authority the words of Amos, "After these things will I return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen, and I will build again the ruins thereof: . . . saith the Lord, Who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world."—(Acts xv. 16, 18.)

CHAPTER XV

THE AUTHORITY OF CONSCIENCE

Enquiry incomplete apart from authority of conscience.—Conscience not a faculty.—But light of God thrown on our reflections on our actions.—Conscience in the heathen world.—History of Israel is history of a God haunted race.—Pentecost the birthday of the Christian conscience.—The Christian conscience: 1. Brings out the revelation in the Scriptures; 2. Rouses the Church mystical to realise its ideals always at work; its alliance with intellectual enquiry; its end unfeigned love of the brethren; 3. Convicts the world not by formation of special societies but by exposing the sin, the righteousness, the judicial pretensions of the world.—Questions omitted and why.—Summary.

THE quest on which we set out is almost completed. That quest was not to discover some foundation of the Faith which should be to all minds satisfactory and for all time unassailable. Such a quest would demand abilities of the very highest order, and a life exclusively devoted to study. Ours was a much humbler task, namely, to put on record the extent to which the faith of boyhood has been affected, for better or worse, in one who finds himself in the evening of life still profoundly attached to the Evangelical teaching in which he was brought up. While admitting his strong temperamental conservatism, he believes that he has honestly tried to do justice to the evidence adduced in favour of opinions of a very opposite tendency, and has, at all events, made it his sincere desire to follow the guidance of Him Who is the Truth. But he does not care to deny that the Personality of the living Lord has always been a factor of preponderant weight in the formation of his opinions. "I know Whom I have believed," has always conditioned the "what I believe."

If this mental attitude is a disqualification for theological study, he is content to be ranked with the non-theologians.

For, after all, *to do* the truth is more than *to know* the truth, and, in all matters of action, Conscience is the supreme authority for man, because conscience is the agreement between his spirit and the indwelling Spirit of Christ as to right and wrong. In opinions as to fact there is always possibility of error and room for correction. But of the duty of obedience to the Holy Spirit there can be no question in the minds of those who have once been made partakers of Him. They have seen by faith the Realities of life. They have known the love of God that passeth knowledge. They have heard the Voice which says: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Besides such knowledge as this, reasonings that would discredit it are necessarily irrelevant.

It cannot be too strongly insisted that the specific characteristic of the Christian conscience is the witness of the Holy Spirit to our spirits. It is well expressed by S. Paul: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost."—(Romans ix. 1.) We have here a threefold witness. First the witness of self, the consciousness that *I* have done something; secondly, the witness of conscience, that is, my conscious reflection upon what I have done, approving or disapproving the deed; thirdly, the witness of the Holy Ghost within me confirming my approval or disapproval. It is from this third witness that conscience derives its paramount authority. Many of the difficulties about the authority of conscience have arisen from overlooking this third witness. Attempts have been made to claim for man's reflection

upon his action some divine authority, and to speak of this reflection as God's vice-gerent in man, as a special faculty inherent in human nature. On the other hand, it has been argued that no such quality attaches to conscience—that it is "a compound social sentiment or judgment."—(Newman Smith's *Christian Ethics*, Third Edition, p. 30.) To the Christian thinker the *origin* of man's reflection upon his own actions does not seem to be a matter of great importance, or to admit of any complete solution. It is only by attributing to this reflection an authority which it does not possess that we are landed in disputes about its origin. The fact is there. Man, about to commit, committing, or having committed, an act, passes judgment upon it. He has killed his brother, and his fury gives him actual pleasure, or the sight of the prostrate form and memory of old companionship and brotherly love fills him with bitter remorse. There is no conscience in all this. Conscience begins when God, as it were, comes upon the scene and demands: "Where is thy brother?" The presence of God puts a new colour on the deed. Before, it was delightful or pitiful; now it is damnable. Man's reflection takes on authority because the authority of God is behind it.

It is, no doubt, true that this quality of authority may be imported into a man's reflections upon his acts from other than Divine sources. A prisoner on his trial, when his conduct is put before him from the Bench or Bar will admit: "I never thought of it in that light." The commanding authority of the society which protects him will turn his previously crude and inadequate reflections into strong condemnation of his deed. Or, a sense of citizenship, of discredit to his school, his family,

his social peers, may supply the necessary element of a second judgment. In the same way that judgment may be furnished by a strong political attachment, or by the appeal of patriotism. In all these cases a partner to man's consciousness is brought into play, and that partner a higher authority than that of the individual doer, and it is quite common to have a life based on these considerations described as a conscientious life. What is meant is that a man takes into account other motives than those of immediate personal pleasure or pain, and habitually regulates his life by these motives. But in such cases there may be a self-regarding background, and, possibly, no reference to the judgment of God. The authority which the man obeys is a self-chosen authority, and the time may come when he will rebel against that authority, and be justified in doing so. The only authority against which no rebellion is justifiable is the authority of God. There is no appeal from that tribunal. Therefore, if conscience is to be paramount, it must have behind it the authority of God.

We may set aside as foreign to our inquiry the history of conscience among the Gentile races of the world, contenting ourselves with S. Paul's summary in the opening of his Epistle to the Romans. God did not leave Himself without witness. Besides the knowledge of Him revealed in his works, His eternal Power and Godhead, the heathen " had the work of the law written in their hearts," and to that was joined " the witness of their conscience " (Romans ii. 15.), the accusing or excusing reasonings that passed backwards and forwards, and all alike pointed to a day of judgment." The speculations of comparative religion do not really lead us to a conclusion very different from that of S. Paul.

Primitive man is the slave of terror, and one of his chief concerns is to pacify the unseen forces that are around him. The fact that in many cases his fears have no connection with morality does not really settle the question of their origin. The history of religion is not always a history of progress. It is very commonly a history of degeneration. The important point is man's consciousness of unseen powers that approve or disapprove of his actions. He has not been left to himself. Behind the visible is the invisible, which man cannot see, but it sees him, and it has to be taken into account in any final judgment on his actions.

The essential feature of the Old Testament is its unfailing insistence on the presence of an all-seeing God, and on the continual pronouncement of His judgments on human conduct. We have it in the oldest traditions of the race, we have it in every stage of Hebrew history. In fact, one of the weakest points in the historical scheme of the Higher Criticism is its failure to give any account of the *conscience* of Israel. When confronted with the problem, it is obliged to assume that in some way Mosaic teaching, of which no record survived, created a religious consciousness which outlived the Philistinic wars, and the disastrous corruption of the twin monarchies, to blossom into life again in the prophetic era. There will still be those who find it easier to believe that preaching appeals to an existing conscience than that it calls a conscience into existence. The history of Roman religion shows us a strong conscience in the family religion of early days, and the enfeeblement of that conscience when the State took over the regulation of religious worship: we see with what difficulty the idea survived until its reinforcement by Stoicism. For reason does

stimulate conscience and, in Greece at all events, it made good some of the defects of a very imperfect religion. Our own experience is not very dissimilar. Even in Christian countries conscience is strongest where home life is strongest. The Old Testament beginning with the home, going on to the hardships of national slavery, and from that to desert life and training, gives an atmosphere favourable to the development of that God-haunted life of Israel which is the true theme of the Old Testament. There is no religion, no national history to compare with it. It is no exaggeration to say that the Old Testament was not only the *nidus* of the Christian conscience, but also its principal stimulus. It is more than any other book in the world, the book which brings God into the homes of the people.

The earthly ministry of our Lord furnished His disciples with a standard of comparison, by which the poverty of their own spiritual life was sorely and most disadvantageously tested. Every now and then a hint is given of the painful contrast between the Spirit of the Master and that of His disciples. But for the most part they are in the background, and we do not find it easy from the records to determine at all precisely how His Presence affected them. "But He knew that it was expedient for them that He should go away," and that they should walk by faith and not by sight. In fact, His Bodily Presence would retard their spiritual growth and hinder that closer intimacy which was to be theirs when He was no longer to them an external object of sense, but a Spirit formed in them and forming their spirits anew.

In a certain sense Pentecost was the birthday of conscience, and assuredly of the Christian conscience.

It was the birthday of conscience in this sense: The idea of the Divine Spirit was no novelty in the world: Jew and Gentile alike recognised that there were moments when God "breathed" upon certain favoured members of the race, and for special purposes imparted His Spirit to them, withdrawing *IT* when the purpose was accomplished. This Spirit was then a gift of God, an attribute or possession of His, lent, as it were, to humanity. But Pentecost revealed—a revelation slowly grasped and understood in spite of its vividness—that God Himself had come to men to stay with them—not as an external power, but as an indwelling, abiding Personality. If we think, as we ought to think, of conscience not as a faculty, but as the whole self within man passing judgment on his actions, we are now, by the Pentecostal outpouring, become aware of the Presence of a second self within us, and that self Divine. "The Kingdom of God is within you." "The Spirit of Truth abideth with you, and shall be in you."—(John xiv. 17.) "I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."—(Gal. ii. 20.) "The anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you."—(1 John ii. 27.) Similar passages might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Man, who had always had capacity for God (*capax Dei*) had become partaker of God (*particeps Dei*).

But what were to be the relations between the old self and the new? The truest answer to this question seems to be that all depends on the degree in which the old self becomes the subject of the new. If we had no experience to guide us, and judged simply from what we should expect, our answer would be that the man, who had by faith accepted the atonement with God through Christ brought home to him by the Holy Spirit,

would in all things submit himself to the Spirit. As S. Paul puts it: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death."—(Romans viii. 2), or, as S. John puts it: "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because His seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God."—(1 John iii. 9.) This is ideally the state of the Christian world. But experience has shown us, and there is abundant proof that both S. Paul and S. John were aware, that the ideal is imperfectly realised. The Holy Spirit rules in us not by compulsion but by suasion. Our relation to Him can hardly be expressed in simpler or more felicitous language than that of Bishop Ken's "Morning Hymn":

> "Guard my first springs of thought and will,
> And with Thyself my spirit fill.
> Direct, control, suggest this day
> All I design, or do, or say."

That is our prayer. Blessed is the life that is lived not merely in remembrance of the prayer, but with the strong faith that God is on our side, God Who dwells in us, to bring it to fulfilment. But the old self is there, and the old limitations. Sins arise from ignorance, sins arise from forgetfulness, sins arise from weakness of the flesh, from corrupt desires, from "lingering taint of bygone years." Oh! the marvellous, unspeakable patience of a holy God, that He should make His home in such as we are!

This indwelling of the Holy Spirit has, however, a twofold result. In the first place the law of God ceases to be a burthen imposed upon us, a challenge from some hostile power awakening a spirit of opposition. It becomes an ideal that we long to realise. The wonderful one hundred and nineteenth Psalm is in some respects

the most Christian aspiration in the whole of the Old Testament, and a standing reproach to us, who fall so far short of it. In the second place, the sense of our natural sinfulness is deepened, and the "breadth, length, depth, and height of the love of God," revealed in the Cross blackens the shadows of corruption within—aye, and it should make us more patient with our fellow-sinners.

The foregoing remarks have not really led us astray from our subject, which is the authority of conscience, but have led us to a position which will enable us to deal with the authority of the living Christian conscience, a more fruitful and practical theme than the rather barren abstraction of the psychologists. For the latter seems often hard put to it to prove its existence, still more to maintain any semblance of authority. Whether it is described as a feeling or as an intuition, it is essentially personal, and not obviously endowed with any voice of command. But the Christian conscience being, in its conception at all events, informed and enlightened by the indwelling Spirit of God, should speak to the soul with the voice of God Himself. *Cor ad cor loquitur.* Our studies in authority will be fittingly concluded with some reflections on the authority of conscience in relation: (1) to revelation; (2) to the Church; (3) to the world.

(1) *The Authority of Conscience in Regard to Revelation.*—The Christian conscience is itself born of faith in revelation. It is apparent from Christian biographies, and confirmed by personal experience, that some message of God revealing His Love in Jesus Christ reaches the soul and is apprehended by faith. In countries where the Bible is accessible to the laity, this revelation is most frequently conveyed by a text or passage of Scripture.

The awakened soul naturally turns to the Bible, and in reading it finds this first revelation confirmed and wonderfully enlarged. A consciousness arises of some living voice of God that fills the pages as they are read with personal communications. The words become living words of the Holy Spirit. The "Thus saith the Lord" is no longer an experience confined to ancient Prophets. It is a present revelation, convincing of sin, arousing faith, kindling love, inspiring hope. Now it is very natural that a book which has brought the soul into such immediate relation with God should become to those who so use it holy ground. On the other hand, it ceases to be holy ground if it is used for unholy purposes, as, for instance, when the Anabaptists found in it justification for their wild excesses, or as it was used by good Christian people in the Southern States, to justify the slave-trade, or by Mormons to justify polygamy. Against such errors the Roman Church would protect Christendom by appealing to tradition, the consent of the great teachers of the Church. Tradition, however, used Scripture to justify the confessional, indulgences, and the temporal power of the Popes. We are reduced to this dilemma. Either we must believe that the book which to us is holy ground is liable to misuse (even though the misusers are quite good and honest men in their intentions), or we must insist that the Holy Spirit is needed to teach us to find in the Bible the true revelation of God. In other words, the Christian conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and ever receiving fresh enlightenment, must have authority in interpretation of Scripture. For, though it is more usual to assign this authority to the Church, our Articles in doing so are careful both to limit that authority and

to admit the fallibility of Churches. We must find an authority which shall make the revelation of God accordant with the highest standard of conscience and, the more rightly we read the Divine revelation in the Bible, the greater will be the enlightenment of our consciences.

Another office of conscience with regard to Revelation is to test the philosophical or dogmatic formulæ which men use from time to time to make their faith accord with their reason. True faith is always the effervescing new wine which bursts the old bottles into which (new bottles they once were) reason endeavours to decant the faith. After all, if I am to give to another man "a reason concerning the hope that is in me" (1 Peter iii. 15), I must do it in terms that he and I can understand. Each age has its own explanation of the world around it—its own conception into which its ideas are thrown. The justice of one age becomes to another injustice; the teleology of the eighteenth century broke down before the evolution of the nineteenth; the materialism of the nineteenth is being destroyed by the very science which built it up. But one thing cannot change, the righteousness of God. The Christian conscience, as it is informed by the Holy Spirit, will scrutinise all these explanations, will sift the wheat from the chaff, will establish the righteousness of God and its relation to the sin of the world, as manifest in the Cross of Christ.

This office of conscience, the correction of dogmatic explanations of faith and discovery of the True Word of God in Scripture is more easily understood when we consider (2) *the authority of conscience in relation to the Church*. For the weakness of conscience is most apparent when our thoughts are directed to the con-

science of the individual, the sorely misnamed right of private judgment. Conscience being, as we have expressed it, not some mysterious and independent faculty within us, but the whole self face to face with God, or believing itself to be so, there is abundant room for individuals to err. We are all fallible, and conscience is not a gift of infallibility. The chance man with his prejudices, his passions, his self-conceit, has no moral right to claim infallibility even for his own interpretation of Scripture. By the Christian conscience we mean, or ought to mean, not the dictates of ill-informed and unreasoning minds—such are false prophets and their pretended inspiration is self-deception. The true Christian conscience is the witness of the Church Mystical in living communion with the living Lord. This true people of God is always endeavouring to present in a holy life the Christ of God. That is the ideal which it is always trying to embody in living fact. It is often put in as a plea for the medieval Church that its passionate desire was to realise its ideas, and to express them in a concrete and bodily form. "Thus the adoration for the land 'over whose acres walked those blessed feet that bore for us the Cross on Calvary' took shape as a fully equipped feudal Kingdom of Jerusalem. The submission to texts such as: 'Keep yourselves unspotted from the world' and 'Take no thought for the morrow' was materialised into the stone walls and sackcloth of a cloister. The daily miracle of the universe was translated into wonder-working images and a swarm of angels and demons."—(A. L. Smith's *Church and State in the Middle Ages*, p. 208). It was not wrong to endeavour to translate ideas into realities. Unembodied ideas are little better than dreams. The fault of the

medieval Church was that its embodiments lacked spiritual life. Ideas embodied in corpses and skeletons are as useless as ideas unrealised. It was not enough to secure a priesthood with apostolic succession, and to endow that priesthood with power to work miracles and to forgive sins, if the Life was not there. It was not a dead Christ but a living Christ Who commissioned His Church to be His living representative on earth. The sense of that commission never died out. The more that religion was externalised and mystified the greater was the revolt from it of the Christ conscience, still living on in Christ's people.[1] Although we connect that revolt with individual names, those names, were but representative of a widespread conscience behind them: a conscience which sometimes was forced into separation from the official Church, sometimes wrought within it. The Reformation was a long process at work for centuries before the fourteenth or fifteenth. The Reformation is a process which must be always going on. For the visible Church being a "mixed multitude," and always trying to accommodate

[1] NOTE.—The Master of Balliol (Professor A. L. Smith) in *Church and State in the Middle Ages*, puts in a strong plea for the good work done by the Papacy, and not least in England, in attempting to realise the ideal of the Kingdom of God in a world overrun by barbarian invasions. He dwells at length on the better side of the Canon Law, and of the efforts of the Papacy to simplify and humanise law, and to elevate the standard of marriage law and matrimonial relations. On the other hand it must be remembered that there was a continuous spiritual revolt against the worldliness in which the Church was involved, by its efforts to govern the world. The ruin of the Papacy Professor Smith attributes to Innocent IV's persistent efforts to acquire possession of S. Italy and Sicily. Professor Smith is least convincing when he seems to defend Innocent's financial extortions by the necessity of putting the Papacy on a sound financial basis, as though the faithful ought to have come forward with a "Central Church Fund."—*Cf.* p. 241.

itself to the world, and in fact to return to the fleshpots, "the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic" of Egypt (Num. xi. 5) will find that the Christ conscience in the midst of it is dissatisfied, is calling for a return not to a dead Christ, but to the Christ Who lived, died, and rose again, Who liveth for evermore: God blessed for ever. We shall not go far wrong if we call the Church Mystical the conscience of the Church Visible, a conscience which works with the authority of Christ. It is this conscience which, with convincing authority, authenticates the Word of God to us in the Scriptures and formulæ of the Church.

The great difficulty associated with this reforming principle of the Christian conscience is that it lies very near to the springs of intellectual truthfulness and of philosophic inquiry. This fact is recognised in our Lord's intercessory prayer: "Sanctify them in the Truth" . . . "that they themselves also may be sanctified in Truth."—(S. John xvii. 17, 19). S. Peter strikes the same note: "Having sanctified your souls (*i.e.*, your very selves, your consciences) in the obedience which the Truth inspires" (1 Peter i. 22 (Hort's *Commentary*, pp. 87, 88)). It is impossible that it should be otherwise. There can be no real moral character into which mind does not enter. The end and object of this sanctification makes this point even more plain. From sanctification we are to go on to unfeigned love of the brethren. This love is not to be conventional. It may co-exist with a frank recognition of intellectual disagreement. But it cannot co-exist with concealment of differences by ambiguous formulæ. Now, setting aside mere "cranks," slaves of some idle, unimportant shibboleth, and keeping before us the Christian conscience, the enlightened,

living conscience of the Church Mystical, we cannot disguise from ourselves that if conscience is to have authority there must be intellectual disagreements, unless, indeed, we are prepared to give a formal assent to doctrines externally imposed. Such disagreements have left their mark on the pages of the New Testament. Again, it is probable that those who are of one mind will work together, and will do better work than any group or groups of Christians who are in disagreement as to aims, methods and modes of stating or regarding truth. To these forces of disruption must be added racial differences, and all the accumulated strength of historical antecedents. How is the Christian conscience to exercise its function under these conditions ?

If the Truth were merely a number of intellectual propositions we might well despair of an answer. But our Lord has taught us that He is Himself the Truth, and we may well ask ourselves if it is at all wonderful that even the Church Mystical has not yet fathomed all that is in Him, " in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—(Col. ii. 9.) S. Peter calls on us to purify our whole selves in the obedience which the Truth inspires, because no partial purification is sufficient for the task that lies before us. " The more we know of Truth," says Dr. Hort (*The Truth, the Way, and the Life*, p. 92), " the more we come to see how manifold is the operation by which we take hold of it. It is not reached through one organ but through many. No single faculty, if indeed there be any single faculty, can arrogate a right to exclude from the domain of truth what cannot readily be subjected to its own special action. It may be that no element of our compound nature is entirely shut out from taking part in knowledge. It is, at all events,

certain that the specially mental powers will never be able to judge together in rightful relation when the nature as a whole is disordered by moral corruption. There is no evil passion cherished, no evil practice followed, which does not cloud or distort our vision whenever we look beyond the merest abstract form of things. There is a truth within us, to use the language of Scripture, a perfect ordering as of a transparent crystal, by which alone the faithful image of truth without us is brought within our ken. Not in vain said the Lord that it is the pure in heart, they whose nature has been subdued from distraction into singleness, who shall see God; or, we may add, who shall see the steps of the ladder by which we mount to God."

Here is abundant work for the Christian conscience, that it is to purge us from those elements in our intellectual apprehension which are really not the fruit of well-balanced judgment, but of some moral failure of which we have as yet, it may be, no suspicion. What S. James (i. 4) says of "endurance" may with special force be applied to the Christian conscience: "Let endurance have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing," on which words Dr. Hort quotes a striking passage from Ewald's *Jahrbucher*, iii. 259. "The spiritual force of this and similar verses cannot be reduced within the limits of commonsense. An 'ideal' interpretation can be excluded only by 'frittering away a pure and necessary word of Christ Himself.' The perfection in all good after which every Christian should strive simply as a Christian, is infinite in its nature, like a heavenly ladder the steps of which constantly increase the higher we climb: but woe to him who would make landings in it of his own invention

and on his own behalf." A careful examination of our most acute theological differences would reveal not a few of these "landings." It is well to have peace with God, well to have peace within, but when peace fills the imagination with a sense of attainment, when it leads to contempt for those who seem to be on lower or less secure landings, when it issues in a love of the brethren which is not quite genuine, not quite strenuous and steady, but fitful as the alternate sunshine and rainy blasts of an April day, we may well suspect that our spiritual enemy has turned our "peace" into a vantage ground for carrying hostilities into the Church of God. The chief merit of the Lambeth appeal for unity was the evidence that it manifested of the working of the Christian conscience. It is in that quarter that hope lies of the still sorely-needed continuance of the Reformation. May the living Lord once more arouse the Church Mystical to be the conscience of the Church Visible.

(3) *The Authority of the Christian Conscience in the World.*—Among the consequences of our Lord's departure from earth it was foretold that the Comforter, Who should come, would "convince" or "convict" the world (S. John xvi. 8), on which word "convict," Bishop Westcott said: "The idea of conviction is complex. It involves the conceptions of authoritative examination, of unquestionable proof, of decisive judgment, of punitive power," the attributes surely of "conscience." Since the visible Church presents Christ to the world, however imperfectly, and to the Church gifted with the Holy Spirit for this purpose was entrusted the commission to forgive and retain sins (S. John xx. 23), it would be natural to infer that our Lord intended the Church to

be the conscience of the world. In some very notable cases this expectation has been fulfilled. The constancy of Stephen and other martyrs was the "goad of conscience," which proved irresistible to S. Paul. Not less convincing and convicting were the lives and deaths of the martyrs in the primitive Church. The death of Telemachus convinced Rome of the iniquity of the gladiatorial shows. The Benedictine "Labour is prayer" ennobled the degraded labour world of feudalism: S. Francis and his followers taught that courtesy was due to the poor as well as to the noble: and so we might without difficulty construct a roll of saints reaching on to our own days who have convinced the world of some, at least, of its sins. On the other hand, the attempt to realise this ideal by the enforcement of auricular confession in 1215 proved utterly disastrous, because it ended in a tariff of penalties, which was altogether destructive to any conscience of sin. It did so in spite of its being a well-meant attempt to enforce "contrition of heart" in place of the mechanical wiping out of sin by performance of penance. Contrition was not, and never will be, secured by compulsion. The old evil of mechanical confession and mechanical satisfaction by performance of penance soon reasserted itself. The verdict of Church history unquestionably is that all attempts to enforce confession on the impenitent in the hope of producing penitence have failed miserably, and have not convinced, but have hardened, the conscience of the world.

It may also be said that the verdict of history is fatal to the attempt to "convince" or "convict" the world through specially constructed societies living outside the world and worked on unworldly principles. Monas-

ticism, kingdoms of saints, ideal republics have all in various forms, and with varying degrees of success, attempted to establish a Kingdom of God upon earth, and have failed. The confession is disheartening, but it has to be made if we deal honestly with historical facts. The weakness of all such societies has been the necessity of setting up conditions of membership, which conditions create sins against the society that are not sins against the law of God. Rules take the place of principles, acts become more important than motives.

We seem to be shut up to life within a home, within a state or country, as the normal life in which our loyalty to Christ has to be proved, and, if that is so, to fresh consideration of this promise of the convincing power of the Comforter. In what way is it to be experienced in the world in which our lot is cast? What kind of conscience has the Spirit wrought, or is He working? Where is that note of authority which we are bound to associate with conscience?

To answer these questions rightly we must look at the promise in its context. We find that it occurs in the forecast of the persecution which awaits the Disciples. In that persecution more than at any other time would they seem to have need of His Bodily Presence to be their Adovcate. But so to think was an error. It was necessary for Christ to depart that He might send to them another Advocate, Who would come to them, stand by their side when they were on their trial, and do much more than save them from judgment. He would carry the war into the camp of their persecutors, would put their adversaries on trial, and secure a conviction against them on the three great counts, namely, sin, righteousness and judgment. He would bring them in guilty of

sin for their unbelief in Christ. He would prove their imagined righteousness to be worthless as contrasted with the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ, Whose righteousness proclaimed by His session at the right hand of God, was the righteousness of His Disciples. He would convict them in respect of judgment by showing them that the Prince of this world, in whose name and by whose authority, they sat in judgment, was himself a convict before the tribunal of God. It was a glorious promise ; S. Paul has placed on record the fulfilment of it : " At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me ; may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear : and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."—(2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.) Not less conspicuously had it been fulfilled when Felix trembled before him, and when he turned round on Agrippa : " King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets ? I know that thou believest." The experience of S. Paul was no solitary experience. Pliny's celebrated letter was a confession that he had found himself incompetent to pass judgment on the Christians. It has been repeatedly demonstrated that the servants of Christ on trial for fidelity to Him have overawed the tribunal and convicted it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

In other words, the sense in which the Church becomes the conscience of the world is this : The Church of Christ, as well as the Church Visible, as the Church Mystical, is constantly on its trial before the world. At times it is tempted to be despondent. The weight of authority against it appears to be overpowering. The spirit of independence that asserts itself against God in

the secularisation of art, of the economic order, of education, of legislation, threaten to pass judgment on the Church for its "Otherworldliness." The science of the world flushed with great achievements over nature, and proclaiming a gospel of materialism, looks down with scorn on a Church that rests on miracles twenty centuries old. The very virtues which the world learnt from the Church have been secularised, its benevolence, its care for the weak and suffering, its love of truth for truth's sake, its preference of duty to pleasure. So the Church put on the defensive is tempted, as we said, to despond, or to water down its faith, and to make it more palatable to the taste of the age.

It is for such a time of peril as this that the promise of the "conscience-authority" of our great Advocate was given to us. "I will send Him unto you, and when He is come He will convict the world." This is a foundation experience in the hearts of all the children of God which the whole authority of the world, under whatever mask it poses, can in no wise shake. (1) The sin of all sins is unbelief in the Christ of God. For in Him is the supreme manifestation of God's witness against sin, and of God's love for the sinner; (2) The righteousness of God is not the fulfilment of certain precepts whether moral or ceremonial, not the conformity to legislations and institutions civil or ecclesiastical, not some safe "landing" on the ascent to Heaven, from which we can look down upon others and hug ourselves for our own security, but it is the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ, His perfect righteousness which is ours by faith, our only plea of justification with God, our inheritance which the Holy Spirit works out in us, conforming us to the likeness of Christ, and bringing forth in us the fruits of the Spirit;

(3) Human authority, so far as it asserts its independence of God, is not merely on its trial, It is already condemned, and the logical forces of anarchy are hard at work for its destruction. Neither the art nor the learning, nor the military force of Society are strong enough to resist the disruptive powers of atheism. The roots of religion and social order are intertwined all the world over. An atheistic society has no future before it but suicide. The Prince of this world has been already judged.

In this review of the authority of conscience many questions have been set aside which have given rise to long and perplexing searching of heart. Such questions are these: "What degree of corruption in a branch of the Church Visible compels those to retire from it who would be loyal to the Church Mystical, in the hope of preserving greater purity of faith?" "Under what circumstances is a loyal Christian bound to withdraw from the communion into which he was baptized?" "What are the circumstances which compel a faithful Christian to refuse obedience to the laws of the State?" "What sort of reparation is due to the Church from a member who has caused scandal?" "What degree of dissidence from the accepted doctrines or ritual of the Church is consistent with retaining ministerial office in the Church?" These are but a few specimens of serious cases of conscience passed by in this review, not because they have been overlooked or are unimportant, but because they cannot be determined by general principles. Circumstances must be taken into account. In some cases S. Paul's question applies: "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? To his Lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand: for the

Lord hath power to make him stand."—(Romans xiv. 4.) Our aim has been to show that conscience is not a power all by itself, acting impulsively and constraining in defiance either of reason or of the general good. We have dwelt on the Christian conscience, the common mind, heart and will of the members of the Church Mystical, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, acting under His guidance, submitting themselves to His judgment. That such a conscience should exist is a necessary consequence of our faith in Christ as the Head of the Church, and in the Holy Spirit as His Vice-gerent on earth. (The phrase sounds tri-theistic, but it seems allowable, since we are thinking of the one God acting as Holy indwelling Spirit in the Church.) That conscience is enlightened and guided by the Word of God in Holy Scripture. The conscience trained in, and well furnished with, Scripture, acting in concert with other minds so trained and furnished has at hand the means for the solution of many doubts. Only one general caution seems from long experience to be very necessary, and that is a caution against self-importance. Considerable practice in dealing with cases of doubt has shown that it is the tendency of human nature to create cases of conscience out of a distorted and excessive self-regard. It is astonishing what simplicity in conduct true humility imports into life.

The general conclusion to which we are led is that the authority of conscience is derived from the immediacy of the relation between man as a spiritual being and God Who is a Spirit: and, further, this immediacy is intensified in power and reality by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in those who are united by living with Him. This union is theirs as members of His Body,

which is the Church. Content and substance are given to this spiritual union by the revelation of God in the Old Testament, and the still fuller revelation of the Incarnate Word of God in the New. The Mind of Christ is there set forth so that it can be recognised and described. The Spirit dwelling in the Church authenticates the Revelation in the Word, and invests it with authority as the Word of God. Human attempts to set that revelation in the framework of the rest of human knowledge are necessarily imperfect on account of the imperfection of our knowledge. The Christian conscience calls for their revision. Men who are members of the Body of Christ are also members of political and social corporations in which their moral life has to be led. The process of bringing moral life into accordance with the Spirit and Mind of Christ is a gradual process. The Christian conscience is the leaven which will enlighten members of the Body of Christ, and through them, the members of the bodies politic to which they belong. The Body of Christ is not a lifeless framework, but an organism growing intellectually and morally. Each member of the Body of Christ is bound so to use his conscience as to minister to that growth: not to be afraid of changes because they are changes, but to examine them, whether they make for progress towards the fulness of Christ, or for decay. But in the midst of these changes, and divisions of opinion consequent thereon, is the one unchanging Lord, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

There can be no new Christ. There can be no earthly Vice-gerent of Christ save the one Vice-gerent Whom He has appointed, His Holy Spirit. On this truth converges the experience of Saints of all ages. They were

sinners. The Holy Spirit brought them to the knowledge of Christ, and sanctified them. No doctrine that creates a new Christ, a Christ Who did not die on our behalf, a Christ Who was not Very God Incarnate for us men and for our salvation can be admitted as true by the Christian conscience. Through Him as our High Priest and our sacrifice we have entered into the Holy of Holies. His glorified Manhood is our all-sufficient plea at the Right Hand of the Father. By the side of this gospel, the speculations, that explain it away, are tinkling cymbals, and very discordant cymbals at that.

The ultimate authority for the Christian faith is the experience of the Love of God, "Who loved me and gave Himself for me," not my love of God, but His Love revealed to me. But God has not left us to the uncertainties of individualistic mysticism. His Spirit reaches our spirits as "the wind which bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the voice thereof."—(S. John iii. 8.) but others have heard it before us. Their memorials of this experience the Providence of God has recorded for our guidance in His Holy Word, and therein also, we hear the voice thereof, through that experience, not through the historical or scientific form in which it is cast. The science may be primitive, the history may not always conform to our standards of historical exactness, but the Word of God that is in them cannot err, cannot mislead. Thus "the Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth," (1 Tim. iii. 15.) because of the response of the Christian conscience to the voice of God heard by Saints and Prophets of old, "who prophesied of the grace that should come unto us, searching what time, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them

did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow them."—(1 Peter i. 10, 11.) The ultimate authority for our faith is a personal experience, which is found to correspond with an age-long experience, of which the Scriptures are the Divinely-given record, and He Who opens the Scriptures to us is still the Risen Lord, Who suffered for us, Who also by His Spirit now dwells in us.

THE END

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